

**IDENTITY POLITICS IN NORTH EAST INDIA: A
COMPARATIVE STUDY OF THE ROLE OF POLITICAL
PARTIES IN MIZORAM AND NAGALAND**

**A THESIS SUBMITTED IN PARTIAL FULFILLMENT OF THE
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CERTIFICATE

This is to certify that the thesis entitled “Identity Politics in North East India: A comparative Study of the Role of Political Parties in Mizoram and Nagaland” submitted by **F. Lalramhluni** for the award of the degree of **DOCTOR OF PHILOSOPHY** is a research work, done under my supervision and guidance. The thesis submitted by her has not formed the basis for the award to the scholar for any degree or any other similar title and it has not yet been submitted as a thesis or dissertation in any University. I certify that the thesis represents the objective study and independent work of the scholar.

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I, F. Lalramhluni, hereby declare that the subject matter of this thesis is the record of work done by me, that the contents of this thesis did not form basis of the award of any previous degree to me or to do the best of my knowledge to anybody else and that this work has not been submitted by me for any research degree in any other University/Institute.

This is being submitted to the Mizoram University for the degree of Doctor of Philosophy in Political Science.

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List of Abbreviations

American Baptist Foreign Mission Society (ABMFS)
All- Party Hill Leaders' Conference (APHLC)
Autonomous District Council (ADC)
Baptist Missionary Society (BMS)
Bharatiya Janata Party (BJP)
Cease Fire Monitoring Group (CFMG)
Center for the Study of Developing Societies (CSDS)
Chakma Autonomous District (CAD)
Chakma Jatya Parishad (CJP)
Democratic Alliance of Nagaland (DAN)
Eastern India Tribal Union (EITU)
Eastern Nagaland Peoples' Organization (ENPO)
Election Commission of India (ECI)
Family Oriented Sustainable Economic Policy (FOSEP)
Hmar People's Convention (HPC)
Indian National Congress (INC)
Inner Line Permit (ILP)
Joint Regional Legislature Party (JRLP)
Mara Autonomous District Council (MADC)
Mara Freedom Party (MFP)
Mizo Evangelical Committee (MEC)
Mizo National Army (MNA)

Mizo National Famine Front (MNFF)

Mizo National Front (MNF)

Mizo National Volunteers (MNV)

Mizo Union (MU)

Mizoram Janata Dal (MJD)

Mizoram Kohhran Hruaitute Committee (MKHC)

Mizoram People's Conference Party (MPC)

Mizoram Peoples' Forum (MPF)

Mizoram Pradesh Congress Committee (MPCC)

Mizo Zirlai Pawl (MZP)

Nagaland Baptist Church Convention (NBCC)

Naga Federal Government (NFG)

Nagaland Students Federation (NSF)

Naga Hills Tuensang Area (NHTA)

Naga National Council (NNC)

Naga National Organization (NNO)

Nagaland Peace Council (NPC)

Nagaland People's Council (NPC)

Nagaland Pradesh Congress Committee (NPCC)

Naga People's Convention (NPC)

Naga People's Front (NPF)

Nationalist Congress Party (NCP)

National Convention of Nagaland (NCN)

National Democratic Alliance (NDA)

Nationalist Democratic Progressive Party (NDPP)

Nagaland National Democratic Party (NNDP)

National People's Party (NPP)

National Socialist Council of Nagaland (NSCN)

Nationalist Socialist Council of Nagaland- Khaplang (NSCN- K)

Nationalist Socialist Council of Nagaland- Isak- Muivah (NSCN- IM)

New Land Use Policy (NLUP)

North- Eastern Council (NEC)

North- East Democratic Alliance (NEDA)

North Eastern Frontier Agency (NEFA)

Pawi- Lakher Tribal Union (PLTU)

People's Conference Party (PC)

People's Representative for Identity and Status in Mizoram (PRISM)

People's Sovereign Republic of Nagaland (PSRN)

Protected and Progressive Villages (PPVs)

Rashtriya Janata Dal (RJD)

Socio- Economic Development Programme (SEDP)

United Democratic Front (UDF)

United Front of Nagaland (UNF)

United Mizo Freedom Organization (UMFO)

Youth Empowerment Scheme (YES)

Young Lai Association (YLA)

Zoram Nationalist Party (ZNP)

Zoram People's Movement (ZPM)

Chapter I: Introduction

The introduction chapter includes introduction of the study, conceptual framework of identity politics, political parties and role of political parties in shaping identity politics in Mizoram and Nagaland, the geo- politics of the study areas, methodology of the research topics. It presents the conceptual framework of the study area; it also includes the definitional and theoretical aspects of the identity politics.

1.1 Identity Politics:

Identity politics can be explained as a political position which is largely based on the interest and perspectives of social groups with which people identify; including ways in which political views are shaped by the aspects of their identity through loosely correlated social organizations. Identity politics is closely connected to the notion that some social and cultural groups such as ethnic minorities, sexual minorities and women are oppressed, and the claim that the individuals belonging to these groups are, by the virtue of their identity, more vulnerable to different kinds of oppression such as cultural imperialism, violence, marginalization and powerlessness.¹ In pre- modern societies, identity was mainly related to filiations, both in the private and in the public space. Identity depended on the place attribute to each individual by his birth, his lineage or groups.

Identity politics is a political position based on the interests and opinions of social groups with which people identify. It includes the ways in which political opinions are shaped by aspects of one's identity through loosely correlated social organizations. Erik H. Erikson presents the psychological aspects of the formation of individual identity, closely linking personal identity with cultural identity, recognizing the influence of society on the formation of the identity of an individual.

¹ Heyes, Cressida (2006), "Identity Politics", in *Stanford Encyclopaedia of Philosophy*. Accessed on 3 May, 2017.

Erikson says, "Identity formation deals with a process located in the core of the individual and yet also in the core of his (or her) communal culture".²

Identity formation employs a process of simultaneous reflection and observation, a process taking place on all levels of mental functioning, by which the individual judges himself (or herself) in the light of what he (or she) perceives to be the way in which others judge him (or her) in comparison to themselves and to a typology significant to them, while he (or she) judges their way of judging him (or her) in the light of how he (or she) perceives himself (or herself) in comparison to them and to types that have become relevant to him (or her). This process is, luckily, and necessary, for the most part unconscious.....

Furthermore, the process described is always changing and developing: at its best it is processing differentiation, and it becomes evermore inclusive as the individual grows aware of a widening circle of others significant to him (or her), from maternal person to humankind'.³

Identity by common understanding is a subject matter defined by terms such as continuity and sameness.⁴ It establishes a temporal continuity between one's past and future. While the past experience and memory brought one to his present identity, the present identity is also shaped by one's hope in the future. A history of a people is often shaped by the hopes and imagination the people hold for its future in interaction with other groups.

There are four main theoretical approaches to the study of ethnicity. These include primitivism, instrumentalism, materialism, and constructivism. These approaches include how to integrate the social and psychological dimension of ethnic identity and the relationship between state and ethnicity. Till the 1970s, the primordial approach which view ethnic identity as innate, fixed and permanent. They

² Erik H. Erikson (1968), *Identity, Youth and Crisis*, p. 22.

³ Ibid., pp. 22-23

⁴ Ibid., p. 19

claimed that each individual is born into an ethnic group or 'tribe', that is perceived as culturally defined units. The instrumental approach challenged the original belief that ethnic groups were innately distinct bounded units cultural characteristics, suggesting that people selectively emphasize these forms an important cultural distinction for them. Furthermore, cultural characteristics are not fixed, they are situational. Materialist approach to ethnicity views ethnicity as a result of class relations, and they are underdeveloped in the literatures of Marxist theories. The constructionist approach belief that ethnicity is socially constructed, and is done so continuously through social interaction, by both elites and ordinary people. Ethnic identity is constructed in the form of literature, deviating from instrumentalist approach, by individuals, by discourse, and by broad social, political and economic forces.

'An imagined community'⁵ is a concept termed by Benedict Anderson in his book "Imagined Communities" to analyze nationalism. He understands nation as confined to the secular- nation state, which has relevance for group identities, depicting a nation as a socially constructed community, imagined by the people who perceived themselves as part of that group. According to Anderson a nation is "an imagined political community and imagined as both inherently limited and sovereign".⁶ Nationalism and nation-ness are a product of cultural artefacts of a particular kind created towards at the end of the eighteenth century. While tracing the roots of nationalism, Anderson identifies several historical conditions and developments that helped the growth of nationalism; the decline of sacred communities, including sacred languages and sacred monarchs, the dissolution of a temporal conception where cosmology and history are linked, and the rise of print-capitalism.⁷ These new conditions and development provided opportunities and

⁵An imagined community is a concept developed by Benedict Anderson in 1983 his book *Imagined Communities* to analyze nationalism. Anderson depicts a nation as a socially-constructed community, imagined by the people who perceive themselves as part of a group.

⁶ Benedict Anderson, (1991) *Imagined Communities: Reflections on the Origin and Spread of Nationalism*, p. 4.

⁷ *Ibid.*, pp 9- 46

motivations for the communities to imagine new limited and sovereign communities for themselves.

Lalsangkima Pachuau argues that the term ‘nation’ and ‘ethnicity’ are originally equivalent, the two terms are always used as synonyms. He states that nation is commonly understood as nation-state usually with the assumption of political sovereignty, and ethnic group refers to a non-dominant people with a shared interest or a common culture.⁸ In recent years, both terms have been used in a more flexible way, but the term nationalism was coined in the late 18th century and ethnicity appeared in the academic world not long ago. The term ‘ethnicity’ was included in an English dictionary for the first time in 1961 and the first recorded use of the term was by David Riesman in 1953.⁹ It gained importance among scholars only from the early 1970s and it gained importance as it appeared as part of political power struggle between the minority and the dominant group as a major political tool.

The term ‘Zomia’ is coined by James C. Scott virtually for all the lands at altitudes above three hundred metres all the way from Central Highlands of Vietnam to northeastern India and traversing five Southeast Asian nations (Vietnam, Cambodia, Laos, Thailand and Burma)¹⁰, in which he identifies how the oral history and resistance are an important tool of defending and maintaining identities for Tibeto-Burman speaking communities in the South Asian region, Scott believes that these ethnic communities choose to settle in the hills rather than to live in plain areas is to have their own sovereignty and to maintain their own ethnic identity.

⁸ Lalsangkima Pachuau (2012), *Ethnic Identity and Christianity*, p. 9.

⁹ Ibid. p. 9.

¹⁰ James C. Scott (2009), *The Art of Not Being Governed: An Anarchist History of Upland SouthEast Asia*, p. ix.

1.2 Ethnic Politics:

Talking in the context of ethnicity and ethnic groups, ethnic politics is largely linked to the process of modernization and change. The concept of ethnic/ ethnic groups has been used in diverse ways, ranging from a people with common biological or racial characteristics to a group with a distinct, or perception of shared culture.¹¹ The nature relationship between ethnicity and the state has been clearly brought out by Professor T. K. Oommen in his paper, 'Nation, State and Ethnicity: Towards a Conceptual Clarification and Empirical Explication'. According to him, while the state is a political entity that is endowed with sovereignty over a clearly defined territory, ethnicity is the product of interaction between (different) peoples: It is a product of conquest, colonization and immigration and the consequent disengagement between culture and territory.¹²

When talking about identity development and transformation, there is a dichotomy between modernity and tradition as explained by an American sociologist Robert Wuthnow; the theories that dominate most discussions of religion and politics is that of modernization theory.¹³ A central premise of modernization theory assumes a dichotomy between traditional society and modern society. Because religions are naturally closely related to traditions, their existence in modern society has become an important study. The evolution of organic solidarity in Durkheim and rationalized type of religion in Max Weber signaled the emergence of the term modernity. The intercourse between modernity and tradition has taken various turns in Asia, especially where traditional systems have been well- established for relatively a long period of time. The persistence of traditions in many Asian societies has to be seen against the political history of anti- colonialism. The term modernization, has therefore, been used synonymously with Europeanization and westernization.

¹¹ Tiplut Nongbri (2003), *Development, Ethnicity and Gender: Select Essays on Tribes in India*, p. 93

¹² T. K. Oommen (1998), 'Nation, State and Ethnicity: Towards a Conceptual Clarification and Empirical Explication', *Social Action*, Vol. 38, October- December, pp. 333- 43.

¹³ Lalsangkima Pachuau (2012), *op.cit.*, p. 15.

Nationalist movements in Asian societies battle on two fronts, i.e., to revive national pride and to fight colonialism.

Will Kymlicka put forward his argument that multi- nation federalism involves a series of redistribution of political power and economic resources. The accurate range of rights and powers accorded to national minorities varies from country to country, but, in the case of the larger national minorities, they typically include the following three elements- (a) territorial autonomy, (b) the minorities' language is accorded the status of an official language in the territory, either as a co-equal official language with the majority language or indeed as the primary or sole official language; and (c) the self- governing region exercises control over a broad range of public institutions, reflected most obviously in control over education, including universities of their own language.¹⁴ If these three elements are not asserted properly, then the issue of identity politics in the form of political movement claiming for more autonomy in a nation state could come up.

1.3 Definition of Political Party:

In order to study role and nature of political party, it is necessary to focus on some of the leading and relevant definitions and conceptual explanations in the context of the present study. In the first place, political party is an office seeking group. Its main objective is to capture political power. During the election time, political parties enter into an electoral fray with other political parties in order to secure itself a governmental power. This kind of power activity distinguishes a political party from other associations and pressure groups.

¹⁴ Will Kymlicka (2007), 'Multi- nation Federalism' in Baogang He, Brian Galligan and Takashi Inoguchi (Eds.), *Federalism in Asia*, p. 36.

Maurice Duverger uses a historically predestinationist framework which makes the mass membership of the party the inevitable product of suffrage and renders archaic many existing and seemingly durable electoral parties. According to Duverger, political parties developed simultaneously with electoral and parliamentary processes. They first appeared as electoral committees that procured for a candidate the sponsorship of certain prominent citizens and raised the funds necessary for the election campaigns.¹⁵ According to him, ideologies, social foundations, structure, organisation, participation and strategies, all these aspects must be taken into account in making a complete analysis of any political party. He maintains that a party is not a community but a collection of communities, a union of small groups dispersed throughout the country (branches, caucuses, local associations etc., and linked by the coordinating institutions. He also stated that “a political party is not a community but a collection of communities, a union of small groups dispersed throughout the country”.¹⁶

MacIver observed that, “a political party is an association organized in support of some principles or policy, which by constitutional means it endeavor to make the determinant of the government.”¹⁷ According to Giovanni Sartori, “a political party is a political group that contest election and is capable of placing through election candidates for public office”. The concept of regional party is found in Maurice Duverger’s concept of “Minor Party”. According to Duverger, “the concept of minor party” deserves special consideration. Duverger defines that a minor party is one “which is minority minded”.¹⁸ On the perspective of their nature, however, there can be a controversy over these minor parties or small parties regarding their performance in government and opposition. Of late, these minor and small parties have emerged which have played significant role in especially in a developing country.

¹⁵ Maurice Duverger (1972), *Party Politics and Pressure Groups: A Comparative Introduction*, p. 3.

¹⁶ Maurice Duverger (1964), *Political Parties*, p. 17.

¹⁷ MacIver (1926), *The Modern State*, p. 396.

¹⁸ Maurice Duverger (1955), *Political Parties: Their Organisation and Activity in Modern State*, p. 290.

The origin of political parties can be traced to the Tudor period in England between 1495- 1603 AD¹⁹, in which the Puritans organized themselves as groups for opposing some of the policy of Queen Elizabeth- I. The Long Parliament in 1640 called by King Charles- I got divided into two groups known as the Cavaliers or the Royalists, who supported the then role of the Monarchy; and the Round- heads or Parliamentarians, who supported the need to reduce the royal authority and the increased role of the Parliament.²⁰ By 1660 AD, the members of the Parliament divided into two groups- the Whigs and the Tories on the issue of limiting the power of the Monarchy²¹. The Whigs favored reforms, whereas the Tories supported the institution of Monarchy and its power. The Glorious Revolution of 1688 resulted in the acceptance of sovereignty of Parliament, thus leading to the origin and development of political parties in England. Towards the end of the eighteen centuries, the Whigs openly and strongly supported democratic reforms, the Tories adopted conservative approach by opposing radical changes. By the early 19th Century, the Whigs got the name Liberals and the Tories came to be known as Conservatives because of adoption of different economic and political policies.

In India, the Indian National Congress (INC), popularly known as the Congress Party, founded in 1885 is one of the oldest political parties in the world. The Party played a significant role during India's struggle for independence and continued to play dominant role in Indian politics both at the national as well as state level for three decades after independence till 1977. Rajni Kothari, the Indian Political Scientist rightly described in 1958 the Indian political system as the "Congress System" under the leadership of Jawaharlal Nehru.²² The rise of regional and state parties and their increasing importance at the national level was seen from the late 1990s and the early 2000 witness the emerging growth of right-wing party,

¹⁹ K.K. Ghai (2017), *Major Governments: Political Systems of UK, USA, Switzerland, France & China*, p. 153.

²⁰ Ibid., p. 153.

²¹ Ibid., p. 154.

²² <https://jan.ucc.nau.edu/~sj6/Kothari%20Congress%20System.pdf> , Rajni Kothari (1964), 'The Congress System in India', *Asian Survey*, Vol. 4, No. 12, December 1964, pp. 1161- 1173, Retrieved on 17th January, 2017.

i.e the BJP. Since 2014, the BJP domination of Indian politics both at the national and state level has increased tremendously. Many regional political parties' allies with the BJP.

At the same time, the rise of low castes, religious identities and linguistics groups have contributed to the dominant nature of identity politics. Despite the adoption of liberal democracy, collective identities in the name of caste and class groups have remained powerful and continue to claim recognition. Caste identities have resulted not only in the empowerment of newly groups, it also increases the intensity of confrontational politics and leading to crisis in governance. Language becomes an important foundation on which group identities are organised in India. Especially in the north east India, political parties based on identity became popular and intensified after the introduction of the Assam Language Bill in 1960 to make Assamese as the Official Language of the State.

Identity formation in the North East India besides cultural identity has been greatly shaped by outside factors such as impact of colonial rule, the variously policies implemented by the Government of India (some scholars even argue as step-motherly treatment by the government) and impact of Christianity among the hill tribes especially in the state of Mizoram and Nagaland. The tribal identity and how colonial impact of religious identity plays significant role in the social- political movements in the north east is worth analyzing. Since India's independence from the British rule in 1947, India faced the twin- problem of religious plurality and multi-ethnicity. In many cases, ethnic identity and religious identity are indistinguishable because in classical Hindu thought all dimensions of life are closely related and culture and religion are not seen as separate entities;²³ resulting that the call for national unity in the independent India did not win the hearts of many citizens. India has witnessed several treads of revolutionary movements across the state and many

²³ Lalsangkima Pachuau (2012), *op.cit.*, p. 29.

minorities political movements have been strengthened by the fear of losing their religious and ethnic identities.

Analyzing ethnic identity of the north east in the realm of democracy, when India attained independence in 1947, the first Prime Minister Jawahar Lal Nehru articulated his famous tribal policy of integration ‘tribal should be allowed to develop according to their own genius’; this, as interpreted by Patricia Mukhim as “the tribes should be left to themselves to chart out their own development paradigms”²⁴ to have the maximum autonomy by the tribals, but the attitude of the government of India in the form of economic development through the various five-year plans have totally unequal when compared to the other states. This soon led to the feeling of neglect and was soon internalized by the ethnic communities, and the result of anti-state activities, insurgency and fighting for independence in the name of ethnic identity right from the beginning of independence.

North East India has been deeply rooted with insurgency right from 1947 and insurgency as a movement of an ethnic can be best treated as an extreme form of ethnopolitical upsurge. And in all these upsurges, one witness a strong ethnic identity. Economic and political liberations are expected to be achieved only on the basis of each ethnic group. Due to the fragmentary nature of people’s understanding of their ethnic identities, the region witnessed large number of insurgent groups and other ethnic based organizations. The people’s identity consciousness has been largely shaped by the fear of being suppressed by the larger groups. In this kind of situation, maintenance of distinctive social and cultural tradition appears to have crucial socio- economic and political consequences.

²⁴ Patricia Mukhim (2007), ‘Negotiating Ethnic Identity in a Democracy’ in B. B. Kumar (ed), *Problems of Ethnicity in the North- East India*, p. 100.

The Christian evangelization of the tribal areas of the northeast India by the western Christian Missionaries during the colonial period has changed the development identity among the tribal ethnic groups, more towards western and Christian identity and their cultural practices. Even at the end of the colonial rule, the influence and the presence of the Christian missionaries to the tribals of the Assam hills districts gained importance as their contribution in the field of education and health section was much more than the government. The Christian teachings and way of life was slowly adopted into the cultural, social and political life in the states of Mizoram and Nagaland. The ethnic groups who fought for sovereign independent nation from India like the Naga National Council (NNC), the National Socialist Council of Nagaland (both NSCN-IM and K) and Mizo National Front (MNF) based their principles and visions in accordance with the Christian teachings²⁵. After the signing of peace accord and cease-fire agreements in these two states, the political parties (both national and regional parties) mostly based their ideology and electoral politics on the lines of Christianity. Christian principles and practices go hand in hand with the cultural, customs, social and political practices among the various ethnic groups.

The introduction of schools based on western education by the Christian missionaries further enhanced the creation of tribal identity in the late 19th century. The adopted language based on roman script served as a link between villages and sub-tribes which were previously delinked because of different dialects among the hill tribes. The Schools also helped to promote new social relationships among the people, led to the restructuring of traditional family, clan, village structure and it contributed to the congealing of the entire tribe.²⁶ Education had not only brought together a sense of oneness among a single-tribe, but it also promoted inter-tribal relationship and that led to the starting of political consciousness among the ethnic

²⁵ NSCN slogan is 'Nagaland for Christ' and for the MNF, it was 'Pathian leh kan ran tan (for God and for our country)'

²⁶ A. Wati Longchar (1995), *The Traditional Tribal World View and Modernity*, p. 139.

groups leading to formation of political parties and political movements to preserve the tribal identity starting from the second half of the 20th Century.

Ethnic groups who are minorities in the larger Indian state are now facing constant threat from the continuous influx of unchecked labour immigrants and refugees from the neighbouring countries²⁷, that lead to living in constant fear of being submerged, the fight for economic resources with the non-locals that lead to imbalance in federal structure in a democratic set-up. Often, political parties in the north east were forced to take up arms rebellion in order to protect their ethnic identity and their natural rights.

1.4 Conceptual Framework of the Study:

This study is a comparative study of political parties in the formation of identity politics in general north east India, in particular Mizoram and Nagaland. The study undertakes the theoretical and instrumental role of political parties in the formation of identity politics and political developments in these two states.

The formation of Eastern India Tribal Union (EITU) in 1955 at Aizawl was seen as the demand for hill state comprising the hill districts of Assam such as Khasi and Jaintia Hills, the Garo Hills, the Mikir Hills, North Cachar Hills, and the Mizo Hills.²⁸ Leaders of EITU sought to unite all political leaders and organizations of hill tribes of Assam to demand for separate Hill State carved out from Assam. It soon became a strong political platform; although not all the existing political parties of the hill areas merged into it but stood as a strong common forum for the tribes in the hill areas. After the coming up of All-Party Hill Leader's Conference (APHLC) in 1960, which emerged as a forum for anti-Assamese language bill, it gradually

²⁷ Patricia Mukhim (2007), *op.cit.*, p. 102.

²⁸ S. K. Chaube (1973), *'Hill Politics in the North East India'*, p. 125.

superseded EITU as the latter lost its role.²⁹ But the emergence of EITU and its role in the hill politics remained one of the important factors for the formation of regional based political parties in the north east states.

The Sixth Schedule of the Indian Constitution provided autonomy to the district councils of the hill areas of Assam states but in reality, the leaders of the hill areas felt that it did not provide autonomy to the District Councils as cited in the Schedule. Moreover, the Sixth Schedule and the rules framed authorized the State Government of Assam to nominate certain number of nominated seats of the non-tribals to check on the working of the district councils. But the tribals did not like the presence of non-tribals in the district councils. Along with the introduction of the Sixth Schedule, the demand for a separate hill state had come in the Khasi Hills. Along with this, the introduction of Assam Official Language Bill on 10th October 1960 led to the formation of the All-Party Hill Leaders' Conference (APHLC) mainly to oppose the introduction of this bill³⁰. Within six weeks of its first meeting at Shillong on July 6-7, the APHLC submitted a memorandum to the President of India reviving the plea for separation from Assam as the only alternative to the acceptance of Assamese as Official Language of the state.³¹ Later on, the APHLC started demanding separate hill states. The APHLC was the first and only all-hills organization- a platform rather than a party.

At political level, APHLC blamed the Official Language Act of 1960 for the territorial division of Assam, the Bill grew the existence of many regional political parties in the hill states like the Jaintia Durbar, the Khasi- Jaintia Political Association, the Garo National Council, the Mizo Union (1946), the Naga National Council (1945). The NNC's resolution in June 1946 was integrationist and opposed to the 'grouping plan' of the Cabinet Mission. The controversial grouping plan of the

²⁹ Ibid., p. 131.

³⁰ R. Vanlawma (1972), *Ka Ram leh Kei (My Country and I)*, p. 250.

³¹ Ibid. p. 252.

Cabinet Mission provided the Assam Congress at that time a common platform with most of the hill parties in the state. The first step towards the creation of Nagaland statehood was due to the convening of the first Naga Peoples' Convention in August 1957.³² The provisions of the Sixth Schedule created four overlapping agencies wielding decision- making powers over the tribal areas. The tribal inhabitants were subject to the authority of the Parliament, the Assam legislature, the Governor and the District Council. This complex pattern of government was aimed at providing a simple, inexpensive model of administration to the ignorant, backward tribal population. As it later turned out, the assurances of self- administration through the District Council turned out to be a mere farce and resulted in strong resentment. It inevitably led to insurrection in both the Naga and Mizo Hills.

The State Re- Organization Act of 1956 had an impact upon the politics of the hill states of Assam at that time as many of the regional parties during this time were formed based on ethnic identities and re- organization of the states were done based on linguistics regions. The introduction of Assam Official Language Bill on 10th October 1960 led to the formation of the All- Party Hill Leaders' Conference (APHLC) mainly to oppose the introduction of this bill. Within six weeks of its first meeting at Shillong on July 6-7, the APHLC submitted a memorandum to the President of India stating that the plea for separate state as the only alternative to the acceptance of Assamese as Official Language of the state. Later on, the APHLC started demanding separate hill states.³³

The two states of India, i.e., Mizoram and Nagaland have been chosen due to the fact that the formation of these states is done with the political agreement which is listed in Article 371 of the Indian constitution. The way in which the role of the state parties and identity politics played in the context of Indian federalism will be highlighted in the thesis. Besides this, the role of the state parties in promoting

³² S. K. Chaube (1973), op.cit., p. 161.

³³ Ibid. p. 251.

asymmetrical federalism in the Indian context will also be an important aspect in this study. The votes pulled by the political parties and political stability based on identity politics which in turn affected the working asymmetrical federalism will be the center thrust of the proposed work. Also, how the political parties in Nagaland and Mizoram have their influence on their own ethnic groups across their geographical boundaries will be studied in the thesis.

1.5 Profiles of Nagaland and Mizoram:

Nagaland is a hill state located in the extreme northeast region of India with Kohima as its capital. It shares boundaries with Myanmar in the East, Assam in the West, Arunachal Pradesh in the North and Manipur in the South. The state covers an area of 16975 sq kms. It is a state of 16 recognized tribes in India and the major tribes are Angami, Sumi, Ao, Lotha, Chakesang, Chang, Konyak, Khianniugan, Kuki, Kachari, Phom, Pochuri, Rengma, Sangtam, Yimchungru and Ziliang. Nagaland emerged as a state out of the Naga Hills District of Assam and NEFA province in 1963. There are 14 districts in the state and the State Legislative Assembly consists of 60 members.

Regarding the fighting for political space in the context of Nagaland, the demand for self- governance was made early as 1929, when the first political organization called Naga Club submitted a memorandum to Simon Commission while visiting Kohima demanding that Nagas should be 'left alone' when the British decide to leave India.³⁴ Then the Naga National Council (NNC) was formed in March 1945 to represent the aspirations of the Nagas. Its representatives met the

³⁴ Sajal Nag (2000), "Construction of Nationhood: Ethnic Minorities secessionism and Legitimization in North East India" in Girin Phukon (ed.), *Political Dynamics of North East India*, p. 30.

Cabinet Mission in April 1946 and asserted that the Nagas would not accept any kind of constitutional arrangement within the Indian Constitution, which led to a nine-point agreement that recognized the distinctiveness of the Naga nation, and gave the latter the option of deciding within ten years to either join the Union of India or get independent.³⁵

Then the NNC launched a plebiscite in 1951 and 99% voted for the separate homeland, which was followed by the Nagas boycotted the first Indian Parliamentary election in 1952 and continued for freedom struggle and declared the formation of 'Naga Federal Republic' as a sovereign state on 22nd March 1956, under the leadership of the Naga National Council. The NNC contested for a separate homeland for the Nagas from Naga inhabited areas in Assam and Myanmar. As a resolution passed in the second Naga People's Convention in May 1958, a drafted Sixteen Point Proposal was formed and was submitted to the then Prime Minister of India on June 1960.³⁶

Following the Sixteen Point Proposal with certain modifications, the Indian government created the State of Nagaland on 24th January 1961 after passing the Nagaland (Transitional Provisions) Regulation of 1962 and created a full-fledged Nagaland State on 1st December 1963. But this was not acceptable to some political organizations and insurgent activities continued in Nagaland led by NSCN (IM) and the factional group NSCN (K).

Mizoram 'land of the Mizos' shares geographical boundaries with three states Tripura, Assam and Manipur, also sharing 722 kms international border with Bangladesh in the west and Myanmar in the east and the south. Mizoram covers an area of 21,087 square kilometers. The Mizoram State Legislative Assembly has 40 members and there are 11 districts in Mizoram. The state of Mizoram came under the

³⁵ The Nine Point Agreement can be seen in Appendix 7.

³⁶ Kuhoi K. Zhimomi (2004), *Politics and Militancy in Nagaland*, pp. 74-75. The 16- Points Proposal can be seen in the Appendix 8.

political jurisdiction of Assam Legislature on 1st April, 1898 and it was categorized as 'Excluded Area'.³⁷ Later the Mizos were dissatisfied with the then Assam government's inadequate response to 1959- 1960 Mautam famine. A social organization the Mizo Famine Front, later on transformed into a political party named the Mizo National Front (MNF) took armed insurgency and fought for independence of Mizoram from 1966.

Following the State Re- Organizational Act of 1971, the District Council of the Mizo Hills attained the status of Union Territory by dissolving the District Council and the Legislative Assembly of the Union Territory of Mizoram was constituted along with three autonomous district councils. Under the provisions of the Assam Reorganization and the North- Eastern Area (Reorganization) Act 1971, there emerged five states: Assam, Meghalaya, Nagaland, Manipur, Tripura and two Union Territories, now states Mizoram and Arunachal Pradesh.³⁸ Along with this, the North- Eastern Council (NEC) was created in 1972 to co- ordinate and speed up development activities in the entire region of the north east states. Mizo Peace Accord was signed between the Indian Government and the underground MNF on 30th June, 1986 led to the full-fledged state of India in 1987.

As mentioned earlier, Article 371 A (1) and Article 371 G(a) of the Indian Constitution contains strikingly similar provision in that they respectively empowered the Legislative Assemblies of Nagaland and Mizoram exclusive powers in matters relating to:(i) religious or social practices, (ii) customary law and procedure, (iii) administration of civil and criminal justice, (iv)ownership and transfer of land its resources. No Act of Parliament can be applied in these two states unless approved by their respective state Legislative Assemblies by a resolution. A

³⁷ Lalsangkima Pachuau (2012), op.cit., p. 69.

³⁸ Rajesh Dev (2005), "Ethnic Self- Determination and Electoral Politics in Nagaland", in Apurba K. Baruah and Rajesh Dev (eds.), *Ethnic Identities and Democracy: Electoral Politics in North East India*, p. 70.

close analysis of Article 371-A throws light in two broad issues; the satisfaction of the autonomy and identity assertion, and the developmental aspect of the region.

Talking about the relationship between the national parties and the states parties in Nagaland and Mizoram, a similar striking feature is that the first states parties in these two states, i.e., Naga National Organization (NNO) earlier which was Naga National Council (NNC) and Mizo Union merged with the Indian National Congress in the year 1976 and 1974 respectively. After the merger, New Delhi became the main Centre of political activities of the political leaders of these two parties thus making the national party taking deep roots in the state politics. In the new millennium, the BJP has gained a stronghold in the tribal states of North East India forming government (including coalition government) in 6 states. Now contesting and fighting for political power in these two states is between the regional parties and the national party (the Congress- I and the BJP), rather than contesting between the state political parties. Since 2014, north east India witness the rise of BJP and its influence among the minority ethnic tribes in different states. The regional political parties who used to champion ethnic identities as their political agenda now ally with the BJP and the party plays a major role in the formation of government.³⁹

In the formation of these states, the state parties and regional ethnic groups formed by the newly emerging educated elites played an important role and in the later stage also, state parties came up and played active role in the state politics; each party trying to promote one's own interests and ideology, mainly working for the upliftment of the minorities and the different ethnic groups. The main objective of the study is to see the role played by the political parties in Nagaland and Mizoram, the study will also seek what are the problems and difficulties that the political parties try to solve, the linkage between the state parties and national parties; and at

³⁹ The statement is made from the election results and electoral performance of political parties in the State Legislative Assembly Elections in the eight north- east states.

the end, do their achievements in the state politics match up with the goals and expectations.

Coming to the relationship between parties and the party system, the question worth asking is whether the party system, that is, the structure of electoral competition and the taking of positions on issues shaped parties themselves? Does it force parties to adopt positions on various axes of polarization and therefore realign parties and their social bases.

1.6 Review of Literature:

Duverger (1972) in his book *Party Politics and Pressure Groups: A comparative Introduction*, London: Thomas Nelson and Sons Ltd. used a historically determinist framework which makes the mass membership of the party the inevitable product of suffrage and renders archaic many existing and seemingly durable electoral parties. Duverger claimed that political parties developed along with electoral and parliamentary processes; first appearing as electoral committees that procured for a candidate the sponsorship of certain prominent citizens and raised the funds necessary for the election campaigns. According to him, ideologies, social foundations, structure, organization, participation and strategies, all these aspects must be considered in making a complete analysis of any political party. He maintains that a party is not just a community but a collection of communities, evolving as a union of small groups dispersed throughout the country (branches, caucuses, local associations) and linked by the coordinating institutions. He also stated that “a political party is not a community but a collection of communities, a union of small groups dispersed throughout the country”.

Chaubey (1973) in his book *Hill Politics in North East India*, Patna: Orient Longman Limited broadly talks about the social and political history of the North

East, and the author mainly put his focus on ‘the contradiction/ competition between the traditional chiefs making use of tribals’ love for pristine freedom to preserve their vested interests against the republican wave in India during independence, and a new elite- western educated Christian leadership of a democratically constituted society that would at the same time retain autonomy. The book succeeded in bringing out its focus clearly while at the same time rejecting the description of the term as ‘tribal political’.

Chandrika Singh (1980) in her article “Nagaland: From a District to a State: Culmination of Democratic Political Process” in the *Indian Journal of Political Science*, Indian Political Science Association, Vol. 41, No. 4 (December 1980), pp. 815-832 highlighted in details about the historical evolution of the state of Nagaland, and its political process along with arms rebellion and its impact. The author raised two important questions, one being on the creation of the state of Nagaland because of political instability that could encourage other hill districts of Assam to come up with similar demands. Secondly, was it a shift in the Government's policy in the North-Eastern Region of the country from one of armed struggle to that of appeasement, thereby giving an answer regarding various factors that were responsible for the emergence of Nagaland, like the culture customs, religion and ethics of the Nagas differ fundamentally from those in the plains of Assam; both destructive and constructive forces were at work in the Naga hills. While the former was in favour of seceding the Naga hills from the rest of India, the latter wanted to solve the Naga problem through peaceful negotiations with the Government of India.

Gassah (1992) in his edited book *Regional Political Parties in North East India*, New Delhi: Omsons Publications pointed out that a few regional parties emerged even before independence; some of them lost their individuality by submerging themselves with the ruling national party, to share the dividends of power shed by a party in power. But after independence, a large number of regional parties based on ethnic identities were formed and these parties have a strong

regional base and they were posing a serious challenge to the national parties in the region. He highlights some reasons which are responsible for the emergence of such strong regional parties in India: i) there has been a lack of confidence in the Congress party, which uninterruptedly ruled at the Center and most of the states for a period of more than three decades. ii) The people of different regions have felt neglected due to comparatively low attention paid to their problems. iii) The regional parties have grown in importance due to the inability and substantial failure of the 'high command' system in the Congress and the BJP.

Saigal (1992) in his article "Federal Democracy and Pluralism in the North East" in Nirmal Mukarji and Balveer Arora (Eds.), *Federalism in India: Origins and Development*, Vikas Publishing House Pvt. Ltd., New Delhi: 1992 argues that the geographical setting of the north east and the interplay of social, cultural and economic forces between the different ethnic groups provide much of the explanation of the recurrent periods of crisis and turmoil to which the region has been subjected. The north east is on the extreme corner of the country and so subject to the usual complexes of being a 'colony'. The centralized system of planning, ignorance of local conditions and the penchant of the Planning Commission for a uniform, dull grey pattern of development all over the north east had led to regional imbalances. This had led to increasingly corrupt regimes in the states. These regimes are widely regarded as representatives of the central power to keep the people in a state of underdevelopment and many movements in the recent past have been directed against the so-called corruption and maladministration of the local governments and the indifference of the central government.

Lalchungnunga (1994) in his book *Mizoram: Politics of Regionalism and National Integration*, New Delhi: Reliance Publishing House analyzed the notion of Mizo regionalism, as expressed in their political movements from the pluralistic approach, to know the stands taken by the major political parties on the question of regionalism. According to him, regionalism has been expressed by political parties in

different forms. There have been parties “regional in character and national in outlook”, “secessionist parties” and “national parties with regional outlook”. Regional sentiment is so strong that even all- India party in Mizoram cannot really have a national outlook in order to maintain a support base among the Mizos. He, therefore, argued that the common denominator of all Mizo political parties is always regionalism in one form or another. The problems which the parties have always found themselves entangled in has been that of arriving a workable compromise between the strong regional sentiments of the Mizos on one hand and the compulsions of maintaining cordial relations with the Centre. The movements of the political parties clearly show that the Mizos can accept federal relations with the Centre but not the complete identification with the one- dominant all- India party ruling at the Centre.

Arora (1995) in his article “Adapting Federalism to India: Multilevel and Asymmetrical Innovations” in Balveer Arora and Douglas V. Verney (Eds.), *Multiple Identities in a Single State: Indian Federalism in Comparative Perspective*, New Delhi: Konark Publishers Pvt. Ltd. discussed asymmetrical federalism, as homogenizing forces intend on mainstreaming the peoples of India into a ‘single, indivisible nation’ continued to press for uniform dispensation. India's experiment in asymmetry can thus be seen as a broader discovery of the minimum level of unity required to maintain a cohesive union. He argues that inclusion of the State of Jammu and Kashmir in the Constitution of India subject to special status autonomy under Article 370 of the Constitution of India and certain other arrangements for the new states and some tribal areas in the north eastern part of India. Asymmetric aspect compared to the Federal Constitution of India. It is because of Article 370 that India is most often labeled asymmetrical. Also, the concept of special status extended and given by the Thirteenth Amendment (1962) which formally introduced ‘special; provision’ for the north- eastern state of Nagaland under Article 371A. Apart from conferring validity and protection to pre- existing laws, the main features of this provision were the protection of local identity through restrictions on immigration and a preferential financial regime. Special provisions have also been enacted for

Mizoram in Article 371G to provide for the safeguard of Mizo customary law and religious/ social practices.

Nag (1999) in his book *Post-Colonial Mizo Politics (1947- 1998)*, New Delhi: Vikas Publishing House Pvt. Ltd analyzes all the political parties which have been existed in Mizoram, starting from the first regional party, the Mizo Union. The author argued that political awakening among the Mizos took place after the Second World War and on the eve of India's independence. After analyzing different political parties in Mizoram, the author gave light upon the statement that political parties began to grow with the rise of the middle class, formed through education, enlightenment and outside contact. At first, the middle class snatched away powers from the hands of the ruling chiefs. Then with the persuasion and movements of political parties, the Mizo Hills District of Assam was graduated to the status of Union Territory in 1972, which was further upgraded to a full- fledged State in 1987. The author has concluded that in all political and administrative developments of Mizoram, the major contribution was made by the Mizo Union in the first period of the post- colonial times, the PC Party, the MNF and the Indian National Congress in the succeeding years. The Community-based parties like the Mara Freedom Party, Chin National Front and the Hmar People's Convention have made contribution for the upliftment of their respective communities.

Nag (2003) in his article 'The Contest for Marginal Space — Parties and Politics in Small Indian States' in Ajay K. Mehra, D. D. Khanna and Gert. W. Kueck (eds.), *Political Parties and Party System*, New Delhi: Sage Publications tries to analyze the problems faced by the smaller states in the Indian federal system, taking into the account of the north east states; how they come into existence and what are the problems and challenges they faced in the Indian federal system. The author argues that the state boundaries demarcate areas with ethnic, linguistic and other identities. Regarding regional parties, the author suggests that the tasks of the parties in small states is to ensure grass root mobilization and compete with the national

parties which yield immense power, resources and a country wide network. According to him, most of the regional parties in the north east are conglomerations of people belonging to tribes and sub- tribes, whose tribal loyalties super side the party ideology then the political crunch comes. Hence, they always remain vulnerable to defection. Thus, defection, dissention, coalition and early collapse have always been characteristics of the regional parties in the north east. Also, he mentions about the other thread to the regional parties' face in reaching the portals of power has been the invocation of Article 356 of the Constitution.

Zhimomi (2004) in his book *Politics and Militancy in Nagaland*, New Delhi: Deep & Deep Publications Pvt. Ltd. has done historical study of the development of politics in Nagaland. He analyzed Nagaland politics with the emergence of militancy and its impact on Naga politics before the signing of Shillong Accord. The ethnic-identity issues and political evolution leading to the state formation and the creation of sub-state structures is traced by the author and emerging cultural problems are analyzed. What the author find out is that the entire region is experiencing a complex multifaceted transition between outsiders, foreigners, compatriots and tribal forces that has sometimes resulted in confrontation, trauma and tragedy. A number of problems have been exposed by the author and possible reforms are suggested.

Singh (2004) in his book *Naga Politics; A Critical Account*, New Delhi: Mittal Publications analyzed the development of political history of Nagaland. Peace and development are the two main issues highlighted along with the implications of insurgency in political development in Nagaland. Soon after India's independence, Naga politics found itself struggling between armed conflict with the State and the efforts of the Indian state and Naga moderates to persuade the underground leaders to solve Naga issue peacefully though negotiations. The author also highlighted the impact of Christianity and western education in identity formation which changed their outlook and political consciousness enabled the Naga intellectuals to demand a separate political unit of their own. The book has made a critical survey of the

political evolution of Nagaland. It also analyzes the working of democracy in Nagaland and people's participation in Naga politics. Factors such as ethnicity, use of money power and underground politics, politics of defection of power and mushroom growth of political parties have been thoroughly analyzed.

Bilgrami (2006) in his article "Notes Towards the Definition of Identity" in *Daedalus*, The American Academy of Arts & Sciences, Pp. 5- 14 tries to define the concept of identity in the context of identity politics where he differentiates between 'subjective' and 'objective' aspects of identity; subjective identity is what oneself conceive himself/herself to be, whereas objective identity is based on social and biological facts about individual. Even though both aspects are closely related, it is neither routine nor plausible in a political sense to conceive oneself as something individual manifestly is not. As long as subjectivity identity is not based on fantasies, the two can be closely linked. He further discussed that the concept of identity in a subjective sense can be important for politics because it can influence one's loyalty and how one adheres to it or allows oneself to be mobilized. In politics, identity is only needed as a means to mobilize oneself and others towards certain goals, such as national independence, racial equality, gender justice, etc.

Jung (2006) in her article "Why Liberals Should Value Identity Politics", in *Daedalus*, The American Academy of Arts & Sciences, pp. 32- 39 deals in explaining identity and politics from the perspective of liberalism discussed that a political identity does not arise spontaneously. Instead, by using categories like race, class, gender to define unequal distribution of rights and privileges. She argued that liberal societies force some of their members to identify with others of similar ethnic, sexual, or economic character. According to her, identity politics is a struggle to gain a political voice. The formation of a political identity is an important prerequisite for democratic political engagement. She still claims that all politics is identity politics because concepts like race and class are politicized in struggle challenge or defence. Political identities are not only constructed, but shaped by them communication and

negotiation with the state development of meaning especially in history and social context. The government has direct control over the conceptualization of political conflict and in creating the conditions for political reflection. Further forms of identity such as race, gender, sex and ethnicity have particular relations to power and contests distinct forms of oppression.

Dev (2006) in his article “Ethnic Self- Determination and Electoral Politics in Nagaland” in Apurba K. Baruah and Rajesh Dev (Eds.), *Ethnic Identities and Democracy: Electoral Politics in North East India*, New Delhi: Regency Publications was studying electoral politics in Nagaland and concluded that the ethnic tribal divisions and their importance in politics can also be discerned by assessing the electoral role of the respective tribes in their areas of habitation. If one look at the candidates from various constituencies, it is a true fact that members of the dominant tribes of the areas are always the contestants and the winners. This demonstrates that it is mainly tribe affiliation and not the party affiliation that determines the outcome of the elections. Besides the emphasis on a “comprehensive political solution” to the Naga problem and “calls for unity” among the Naga tribes the political discourse dwelt on other areas like health, economy, employment, formation of women department etc. but they received only a routine mention without any clear blueprint for action and played almost an insignificant role in public rallies of the various parties.

Biswas and Suklabaidya (2008) in their book *Ethnic Life- Worlds in North-East India: An Analysis*, New Delhi: Sage Publications examine ethnic- life in the north east India put forward an argument that terms such as ‘homeland’, ‘indigeneity’ and ‘tribal identity’, etc., produce a sense of well- defined ‘self’ opposed to others. Most of the time, the Other is constructed as ‘outsider’, ‘immigrant’ and ‘oppressor’, and this brings up a question, does identity politics in India’s North- East thrive on construction of a hostile other? The focus is on a phenomenological understanding of the life world to understand the culturally embedded structure of communities for which the perceived experience of cultural

politics forms an identity. It analyses the cultural and political determinants of ethnic and identity-based struggles in Northeast India, as well as the cultural politics of ethnic mobilizations in the region.

Jhimomi (2009) in his book *Political Parties in Nagaland*, Dimapur: Graphic Printers talks about the background and their formation of political parties in Nagaland. The election manifestoes of different political parties, promises to the voters, voting behaviour and the results of elections in Nagaland since 1964 till 2008 elections are thoroughly studied here.

Pachau (2012) in his book *Ethnic Identity and Christianity*, Bangalore: Centre for Contemporary Christianity deals about the socio- religious and political movements of the second half of the twentieth century in Northeast India with particular focus on Mizoram. The continuing socio- political movements in the region enhance the value of the study and the focus and the development of identity of the tribals in the Northeast India. The impact of Christianity in identity formation among the tribals and its linked with identity politics leading to political turmoil in the region. The book examines the place of religious conversions in the development of ethnic identity consciousness and its resultant ethno- political movements in Northeast India choosing Mizoram as a case study. The author's work is narrative and interpretative history of Christianity in Mizoram. He exploits the manner and significance of the interplay between Christianity and the evolving cultural and political identity in Mizoram in which he concludes that in the identity formation process of the Mizos, Christianity played a major role that deeply transformed the Mizo society. In the process of the interaction between Christianity and Mizo cultural ethos, Christianity itself became indigenized.

Misra (2014) in his book *India's North- East: Identity Movements, State and Civil Society*. New Delhi: Oxford University Press deals with ethno-nationalist

struggles in Assam and Nagaland states. The author emphasizes that Northeast India, home to hundreds of ethnic groups, remains very complex but poorly understood. The author tries to explain the mystery of "how Assam, with its centuries-old relationship with the Indian subcontinent, could give rise to a militant movement with clear separatist overtones". The author made three main points arguments to answer his questions, the first is the question of identity politics, which constitutes identity politics ethno-nationalist dispute in the background. About Nagaland, he claims that the Nagas have always done this kept themselves separate from the Indian state. The Naga National Council even had declared the sovereignty of Nagaland before Indian independence. This among many other factors led to the deployment of the military and the rise of rebel groups like the NSCN along with armed struggle against the Indian state. Another focus of the author's argument is that the state and its "double". "repression" and "negotiations". The third argument is that of civil society and an understanding of how civil society sought to participate as a dialogue partner between them country and its armed opponents to find peaceful solutions.

Pachau (2014) in her book *Being Mizo: Identity and Belonging in Northeast India*, New Delhi: Oxford University Press examines issues of ethnicity and identity with special reference to the Mizos. To understand the emergence of Mizo identity, the author first conceptualizes how identity is formed and constructed. Exploring the continental Indian view of Northeast India, the author delves into the notions of how "difference" plays an important role in the creation of identity. According to the author, concepts of "difference" are embedded in the politics of domination and hegemonization. She also emphasized the role of social organizations, which enforce the formation of identity and are not far from the self-confidence of the ethnic self. Such self-referential concepts are seen as agents that defy the vision of the "other" while organizing the "ethnic self." The Mizo community's engagement with Christianity, which according to the author is 'localized' also is not also seen as chief organizer of Mizo identity, but also an important marker that set boundary of belonging and exclusion.

Shonreiphy (2016) in his article “Territorial Dimensions in Naga Peace Process”, *International Research of Journal of Social Sciences*, Vol. 3(5), pp. 41-45 talks about the peace process in Nagaland with the issue of integration in which he links the integration and Naga’s declaration of self- determination politics, which is based on political, cultural, and ethnic identities where Nagas are claiming to be culturally, socially, politically, and ethnically different from the rest of India. Based on these differences that they have the right for self- determination. He further argues that of late, it has been observed that there is a difference of opinion among the Nagas on the issue of self- determination, but there is unanimity among all political parties, civil societies, and insurgent groups on the issue of integration which is largely influenced by ethnicity.

Patnaik (2016) has analyzed Mizo identity and its transformation with the development of politics in Mizoram in his article “Mizo Identity and Indianization: A Case of Conflict Transformation in Mizoram, *Indian Journal of Public Administration*, Vol. IXII, No. 3., pp. 623- 635. First part of the article deals with political history of the Mizos and impact of culture to the political development. The author has stressed on the point that culture and identity of the Mizos are intertwined with the political process in Mizoram. Mizo identity has been largely shaped and changed with the coming of Christianity to the Lushai Hills brought by the British Christian Missionaries. For the Mizos, Christianity plays more prominent role than language in ethnic identity formation. According to him, the discussion of identity in north-east India is largely based on ethnic lines, which has impact on political structure and culture, also identity formation takes in form of conflict and conflict resolution. But Mizo identity has been developed around all diverse elements of Zo-Chin communities and the interventions of the Indian State further consolidated Mizo Identity. The author also stresses the role played by civil society organizations like the YMA, MHIP, MZP and MUP in putting a pressure to the government in pursuing Mizo identity and culture.

Thomas (2016) in his book *Evangelizing the Nation: Religion and the formation of Naga Political Identity* examines the extent to which a religion armed with truth claims, assumptions and agendas mediated the formation of a modern political identity among the Nagas. The author takes the readers through the history of more than hundred years of the Nagas and delve into the various ways in which their struggle to define themselves came to be mediated by circumstances not if their choosing. He highlighted how the term 'Naga' was widely used by the British officials in the 20th centuries to identify and classify people and subsequently, Nagas themselves found it useful term to describe their collective identity. The book attempts to complicate both the narratives and argue for a more nuanced understanding of the missionary agendas and practice, its politics and interventions in culture especially from a colonial context to the late 21st centuries of political developments, how Christianity has influenced Naga identity as a whole and the contestation between identity and politics in the form of arms struggle has been deeply analyzed by John Thomas.

Zoramthanga (2016) in his book *Mizo Hnam Movement History: A History of Mizo Nationalism Movement*, Aizawl tries to identify the roots of Mizo nationalism in which he identifies Mizo identity distinctive from the rest of the country, which is unique on its own and the reshaped by Christianity. The book which has been exerted from his personal diary talks in detail about Mizo history, how Mizo culture and administration has been changed and re-shaped by the entry of British to Mizo inhabited territories and the rise of Mizo Nationalism in the form of MNF movement. In length, Zoramthanga has talked about the evolution and development of insurgent movements in Mizoram from early 1960s since the formation of MNF as a political party and the signing of peace accord in 1986. The role of Mizo identity protection during political disturbance has been highlighted.

Bijukumar (2019) in his book *Parties and Electoral Politics in Northeast India- Contention of Ethno- regionalism and Hindu Nationalism*, Delhi: Kalpaz Publication raises the issue of elections and party representation in various states of Northeast India. The author tries to emphasize the development path of the North-Eastern states from ethno-regionalism. to Hindu nationalism. As most of the states in the Northeast India are largely dominated by Christianity especially among the Hill tribals, but there is an existence of ethno- regional political parties and organizations who are seeking ethnic assertions and self- determination. The author highlights how the politics in the Northeast has been largely dominated and scripted by the Congress party since independence, but the political discourse has been changed since 2014 general elections. The right-wing politics (Hindu nationalist politics) assumed a centre stage thereby greatly reducing the political space of the Congress. Factors that lead to the emergence of right-wing influence in different states of Northeast has been analyzed through the electoral performance and policy perspective.

Lalnunzira (2019) writes an article “Mizo Identity: Bible atanga thlirna” in B. Lalnunzira (ed.) *Mizo Identity Bihchiahna*, Aizawl: SMCI ATC Unit, pp 170- 186 looks at the development of Mizo identity from the perspective of Christianity. He mentions that Bible has two ways of analyzing ethnic identity, and he suggested that Mizo identity and way of life has to be in accordance with the teachings of Christianity, as Christianity gives a new identity to Mizos and he believes that ethnicity and identity can evolved and developed, not fixed and permanent. Some of the cultural practices that developed before colonial rule are in accordance with the teachings of the Bible and the distinctive characteristics of Mizo identity in the 21st century in the mixing of tribal ethnic identity with Christian culture, which is distinctive in nature, not all groups do not have, according to the author. He concludes that well blend-in of Mizo identity and Christian identity could prevent minority cultures like the Mizos from outside assimilation.

Rawsea (2019) in his article “Mizo Identity Hmathlir” in B. Lalnunzira (ed) *Mizo Identity Bihchiahna*, Aizawl: SMCI ATC Unit, pp 16- 33 has analyses theoretical aspects of identity in general, the development of identity in academic fields and works carried out by Mizo academias regarding the construction of Mizo identity. His article touches the Mizo political history and society, how the colonial rule and Christianity has given a new identity that consolidates the tribal identity. Talking about the contemporary issues and challenges, the author stress on the importance and maintaining balance between the national identity at the same time, not compromising at our ethnic minority identity, cultures and symbols.

Vanlalauva (2021)’s recent published book *Independence Puan leh Underground Sawrkar (Buaina Bul: A dumpawl leh Intellectual)*, Aizawl talks in details about the MNF as a political party and the declaration of independence and the underground government. The author himself as one of the Officer of the underground group, Secretary to the then President of the underground MNF, 4 time elected MLA, served as a Minister to the MNF government from 2002- 2008 gives the firsthand experience as how the MNF as an underground organization functioned during 20 years in the jungle, the crisis within the party and the relationship between the underground MNF and the public during those times, the bargaining and negotiation between the underground MNF and the Indian Government along with the intervention of the Churches in Mizoram are mentioned.

Zhimomi (2021)’s book *A Brief Survey of Naga History*, Dimapur: Heritage Publishing House writes about a history of Nagas focuses from Ahom- Naga Wars from 1228- 1838 AD, Anglo- Naga War (1832- 1947) and political development of Nagas from independent period. As a person who belongs to the first elected members of the State Legislative Assembly of 1964, the author shares many of his first-hand experience in politics and in the administration. The detailed and primary sources information especially in the post-independent period in Naga political

developments, insurgency and the role played by both the state and non- state actors in the political development of Nagaland are highlighted in this book.

Pachau (2022) in her article “Ethnic Mobilization and Electoral Process: A Study of the Contours of Identity Making in Mizoram” in Jelle J. P. Wouters (ed.) *Vernacular Politics in Northeast India: Democracy, Ethnicity & Indigeneity*, New Delhi: Oxford University Press talks about the linkages between ethnic identity and the role of political parties in the political discourse of Mizoram. The author makes an attempt to understand the political swings in the electoral politics through the medium of electoral processes. The article seeks to understand the reach of electoral politics in representing the people and their concerns. She traces the history of electoral politics since independence and the genesis of political parties in Mizoram, the history of violent resentment against the state in the form of independent movement, the resistance of Mizo ethnic integration by minority ethnic groups in the state. Study and analysis have been done in the context of parties that have been in power and their politics. The article uses elections to explore how Mizo engages with political issues, whether it is the issue of identity, representation of governance, and the paradoxical ways in which people work out these elements. According to her, the political discourse has been driven by informal political players such as NGOs including the Churches.

The existing literature which are highlighted have mostly analyzed the role, nature and development of identity politics and political culture.

1.7 Research Gap

The notion of identity and ethnicity are inter-related in discussing the politics in North East India, and it requires new study in the present context of the state politics. In-depth analysis on the role of political parties in north east states towards

identity politics, politics of insurgency and electoral politics is missing in the existing literature. This is the departing point in this research and the research questions raised will be analyzed with the help of the methodology mentioned. The role played by political parties in identity formation are missing in the existing literature. This research is an attempt to fill up the gap. The existing literatures on this area are either one-dimensional or local perspective.

1.8 Statement of the Problem

Identity politics have the key role in the formation of political parties. The identity politics in the northeast India is based on ethnicity. The rise and fall of political parties is seen in the background of ethnic identity. Many regional political parties founded at the beginning of the state formation in the North East India are based on ethnic identities and nationalism ideologies are found to be instable. Mizo Union, the first regional party in Mizoram and Naga National Organization (NNO) merged with the Indian National Congress. At the same time, anti-state movement in the form of insurgency has broken out in Mizoram and Nagaland based on identity issue. The insurgent movements that took place in both the states have political as well as territorial impact towards the state politics in both Nagaland and Mizoram.

Regarding political parties, the Naga People's Front (NPF) was founded in 2002, the party claimed to be one of the oldest state parties in Northeast India, with roots dating back to the formation of the Nagaland Democratic Party in 1963. , whose nomenclature has been changed many times times to suit the needs of different eras and the NPF formed the government with the BJP from 2008 to 2018. Currently, the MNF and NPF parties are part of the "Northeast Regional Political Front" of Northeast parties supporting the NDA. The accommodative aspects of these state parties which is based on ethnic identity can be in question.

1.9 Scope of the Study

The study focuses on identity politics and the role played by political parties in the identity formation in Mizoram and Nagaland. Both national parties and regional parties in these two states are analyzed in the research. It also focuses on the strategies and policies of political parties in promoting identity politics and the role of insurgency in promoting ethnicity and ethnic nationalism. The study opens the scope for further research in the area of insurgency, identity politics, peace and stability in the north eastern states. A comparative study approach is an important tool in analyzing the political developments in a state by comparing one variable with another one.

1.10 Limitations of the Research

Limitations and problems that occur during the research are language barriers and geographical barriers. In course of acquiring proper and authentic information, language and social barriers limit the research study. There are physical difficulty and time factor in reaching out and approach to relevant persons and respondents. Many other factors as time, place and accessibility of relevant data, document and person for carrying out the research thoroughly within and outside Mizoram and Nagaland. The difficulties in physical accessibilities of written works, lack of proper documentations and office-records limit the research study. The Covid- 19 lockdown and the army shootout in Mon district in Nagaland during December, 2021 slowed down the field work. Choosing respondents for sample size and their availability based on quality and rationality are the limitations in this research.

1.11 Objectives of the Study

- I. To trace the origin of identity politics in Mizoram and Nagaland.
- II. To study the emergence of different political parties which are founded on the issues of cultural and historical ethnic identities.

- III. To study the role between regional parties and national parties in managing national and regional interests in Mizoram and Nagaland.
- IV. To study the role of insurgency and its influence on political parties in Mizoram and Nagaland.
- V. To analyze the implication of the electoral performance of the political parties in political stability and political developments in Mizoram and Nagaland.

1.12 Research Questions

- I. What is the historical background of identity politics in Northeast India with special reference to Mizoram and Nagaland?
- II. What role does identity politics play in the formation of political parties in Northeast India with special reference to Mizoram and Nagaland?
- III. What is the role of national and regional parties in managing the national and regional interests?
- IV. How does insurgency have impact upon political parties and identity politics in Mizoram and Nagaland?
- V. What are the implications of electoral performance of political parties for political stability and developments in Mizoram and Nagaland?

1.13 Methodology

The study of this research is empirical and comparative in nature. It seeks to study the role of political parties in the formation of identity politics in Mizoram and Nagaland. The study is based on inter-disciplinary approach. Both qualitative and quantitative methods are applied in this research. As various variables like political parties, political institutions, and socio- economic environments are determined the dynamics and developments of ethnic identity and political activities in Mizoram and Nagaland. These variables are of inter-disciplinary in nature. Historical views were taken through in-personal interviews. A comparative study is applied in order to

answer of questions related to the historical and comparative perspectives of the study. In answering the research questions and getting information and data related to the historical developments are collected through both primary and secondary sources. Content analysis of historical documents, Memorandum of Understanding (MoUs) and media reports about political developments in Mizoram and Nagaland. Academic discussions, opinions and perceptions of people that belong to political parties, institutions and community organizations are used in this study.

Interview scheduled is used for this research. The selection of respondents is based on the purposive sample tool to obtaining the primary information and data. Sixteen personal interviews with leaders of political parties and prominent citizens associated with NGOs and Civil Society organization are conducted. A list of interviews with leaders & office bearers of political in Mizoram and Nagaland is attached in the appendix. The details of interviews are given in the respective chapter discussion. Opinions of academicians and researchers from Mizoram University, Nagaland University and Indian Council of World Affairs (ICWA), New Delhi. Views of Editor NEZINE Guwahati, Editor of the Shillong Times, Editor of Nagaland Page, Editor of the Frontier Despatch are also taken in to an account for this research.

Election Data from the Election Commission of India, State Election agency, CSDS Data banks, election manifestos and pamphlets of political parties are used as primary sources to analyzed research objectives. Secondary sources as, libraries, books, journals, newspapers and periodicals and news bulletins from internet sources are used in the research.

1.14 Chapterization

Chapter One- **Introduction:** This chapter introduces the topic, giving an overview of the detailed literature review, research objectives and questions to be developed in the thesis. It also gives indebt and detailed introduction of identity politics.

Chapter Two- **Mizoram and Nagaland: An Ethno- Political Overview:** Chapter two is dealing with historical aspect of the study area. It reviews the political history, socio- geographic profile of Mizoram and Nagaland, examine the factors that led to the formation of political parties in the two regions.

Chapter Three- **Evolution of Political Parties in Mizoram and Nagaland:** This chapter looks at the factors responsible for the rise of political parties. The impact of political parties towards ethnic identities in both the states is analyzed and highlighted.

Chapter Four- **Role of Insurgency in the Identity Politics:** This Chapter examines the role of insurgency in state politics as both Mizoram and Nagaland are affected by insurgent movements and the insurgent groups are founded on the basis of ethnic identity.

Chapter Five- **Electoral Performance of Political Parties in Mizoram and Nagaland:** The fifth chapter examines electoral performance of political parties in Mizoram and Nagaland. It includes a comprehensive study of results of State Legislative Assembly results and analysis of election manifestos of different political parties in both the states. The chapter explores their role in bring political stability and political development in the region

Chapter Six – **Conclusion:** The last chapter examines the changing trends of the political parties and political developments. This concluding chapter is an analytical summing up interpretation of all the previous chapters and the findings of the research.

Chapter II: Mizoram and Nagaland: An Ethno- Political Overview

The study of this chapter presents an over-view of the ethno-politics, its origin and historical development in Mizoram and Nagaland. It mainly focusses on ethnic and historical formations, starting from the pre-colonial era, colonial era, after independence and the evolution of state formation of the two mentioned states. The previous chapter discussed the introduction of the research work. It presented a theoretical framework of the research area and geopolitical profile of Mizoram and Nagaland. It reviewed the important published literature and works related to the research area under the current study.

2.1 Ethno- Political Historical Evolution of Mizoram:

The term ethnopolitical means a conflict between two or more groups and These are intergroup conflicts where the attitudes, stereotypes and forms of group members communication reflects the ethnopolitical context. For the context of Mizoram and Nagaland, the groups and intergroups conflicts in the history can be best described as the colonial annexation of the tribals, and later the merger of these two states with the Indian Union in 1947.

Mizoram state is carved out on the basis of ethno-cultural profile. The origin of the term 'Mizo' literally means highlander or hillmen. But to the understanding of the general mass of the people, it means to those use the *Lusei*⁴⁰ language. Thus, being identified as Mizos presupposes usage of Lusei language.⁴¹ Lusei serves as the pan- Mizo language. It is a vernacular dialect used to speak across the Mizoram state.

The Mizos and all related clans claimed to have originated from Chhinlung or Sinlung; majority of the writers of Mizo history claimed this (whether a place or a

⁴⁰ Lusei literal translation is 'long head' that explain way the hair has been tied by the Mizo boys in the pre- colonial times. The Britishers used 'Lushai' to describe the Lusei dialect speaking people.

⁴¹ C. Nunthara (1996), *Mizoram: Society and Polity*, p. 33.

person's name) from somewhere in south- west China or central China.⁴² Thus, historical writings claimed that the original home of the Mizos is located somewhere in the East. As seen from the writings of Vanlawma, from Chhinlung, they were said to have a nomadic life coming down south to the present Shan state of Burma.⁴³ Slowly from Shan state, they reached Khampat of Chin hills of Burma. By the middle of the 16th Century, the first batch of Mizos crossed Tiau river and entered the area of the present Mizoram. It was believed that the last batch of migration from the Chin hills crossing Tiau river was that of Sailo clan.⁴⁴

2.1.1 Colonial Era

The Mizos enjoyed full political and administrative autonomy before the advent of British in the form of the institution of Chieftainship. Each clan had their own Chief and they were of independent of one another. The Mizos had come into contacts with the British when the British India expanded their territories in the Indian continent towards the Chittagong Hill Tracts. The Mizo history in the late 19th century was marked with the invasions of the Mizo Chiefs on the British occupied territories and the retaliatory expeditions. By the end of the 19th century, the British decided to take immediate active measures to control the invasions by the Mizo chiefs. A single expedition was carried out in January 1889 with Demagiri as its base but this did not bring fruitful result. Therefore, a fresh expedition known as 'Chin-Lushai Expedition of 1889- 1890' was planned⁴⁵. This marked the final colonization of Mizoram.

The British entered the Mizo Hills in 1882 and in the absence of a united force from the Mizos; the British could establish their authority in Mizo Hills by

⁴² Ibid., p. 39

⁴³ ibid., p. 39

⁴⁴ Sangkima (2000), *Essays on the History of the Mizos*, p. 26.

⁴⁵ Ibid. p. 30.

1891.⁴⁶ The hill region known as the 'Lushai Hills' was ruled under the administration of Assam and Bengal; 'North Lushai Hills' under the administration of Assam and 'South Lushai Hills' under the administration of Bengal respectively. The North Lushai Hills and South Lushai Hills Districts existed for the period of 7 years and came to an end on 1st April, 1898 under the law passed in the Lushai-Chin Conference. Although annexed as a district, the Lushai Hills was looked after by a special political agent—the Superintendent, a direct representative of the Governor-General of British India. This is suggestive of the fact that the Lushai Hills was not brought under the political jurisdiction of the Assam Legislature, and thus categorized as "Excluded Area".⁴⁷

Before the Government of India Act 1919 in Lushai Hills The area was a "Schedule Area" under the Scheduled Area Act. 1874 because it is a hilly area inhabited by primitive tribes and poor people financial resources. In 1919, this area was put under the category of 'Backward Area' based on recommendations from senior police officers such as Robert Reid leaving the region out of the reform plan.⁴⁸ Consequently, the popular ministry in Assam could not exercise authority over the administration of the Lushai Hills district. The Governor of Assam was directly responsible for the administration of Assam's backward areas.

Thus, the region of Lushai Hills remained unrepresented in the Assam Legislative Assembly. In addition, the Government of India Act, 1935 incorporated "Excluded Area" and "Partially Excluded Area" for the hilly areas of Assam.⁴⁹ Accordingly, Lushai Hills District, Naga Hills District and North Cachar Hills District were declared as 'Excluded Area' while Mikir Hills and Garo-Khasi Hills

⁴⁶ J. V. Hluna (1992), *Education and Christian Missionaries in Mizoram*, p. 27.

⁴⁷ J. V. Hluna (1985), *Church and Political Upheaval in Mizoram*, p. 9.

⁴⁸ S. N. Singh (1994), *Mizoram: Historical, Geographical, Social Economic, Political and Administrative*, p. 140.

⁴⁹ *Ibid.* p. 140.

were declared as 'Partially Excluded Area'.⁵⁰ Between 1937 and 1947, the administration of the excluded region was administered by the Governor of Assam, who acted independently of the Assam Government.

The British policy under the shadow of Excluded and Partially Excluded Area kept these hills people isolated from the general administration. This arrangement was intentionally done by the British to prevent the tribals from any type of reform. Taking the advantage of this arrangement, the Christian Missionaries with the patronage of the British government, converted Mizos into Christianity. The authority kept them isolated from the rest of the country by imposing Inner Line Regulation. This in one way sowed the seed of separatist tendency.

Political awakening among the Mizos could be said to start in the middle of the third decade of the twentieth century. The earliest occasion was on the question of revival of *Zawlbuk*.⁵¹ N. E. Parry's attempt in 1926 to restore the long-neglected institution hurt the feeling of certain section of the people who were against the policy of restoration. The common people thought that Parry had a soft corner for the local chiefs. As such, they began to accuse their chiefs and the matter was reported to the Superintendent. He, however, paid no attention to their case. Therefore, they began to find ways of throwing off the old yoke of the Chiefs,⁵² and looked forwards to attain their goal at the future date.

In view of this uncertain development in 1926, a section of the Mizos began to entertain the idea that nothing would be achieved if they remained mere spectators. They began to collect information secretly and tried to find out the means by which they could participate in Assam Legislative Assembly through elected representatives. For this purpose, representatives were sent to Shillong, the then capital of Assam, to explore the possibility of sending representatives from Mizoram.

⁵⁰ Ibid., p. 141.

⁵¹ *Zawlbuk* means a bachelor's dormitory where all the young men of the village slept together at night. It acts like a self-defense centre for the village at the times of emergency especially during war times. Besides this, *Zawlbuk* promotes the spirit of companionship and comradeship.

⁵² Chaltuahkhuma (1981), *Political History of Mizoram 1920- 1980*, pp. 15- 16.

The team thus sent was told by some local advisors that something could be done for them if they could enlist 1000 members or supporters expressing their desire to participate in the Assam Legislative Assembly.

After returning from Shillong, they began a drive with a view to getting the support of the required numbers. As political movements were totally banned by the district authority, they did everything covertly. But their activities came to the notice of the District Superintendent and some of their leaders were arrested and their documents were seized. Later, they were sent to jail on 22nd October, 1926. The persons who were actively involved in the movement were Telela Pachuau (Chuaungo), Thuama Ralte (Lelhchhun), V. Z. Biaka Hmar (Varte) and Liansiama Chhangte; all residents of Kulikawn locality in Aizawl.⁵³ Their Secretary, Laldela was deported to the Chin Hills of Burma. With this the movement came to an end until it was revived some 20 years later.

The political inclination of the people grew since 1935 when a non-political body called the Young Lushai Association was later transformed into the Young Mizo Association (YMA) was founded. The new experiences gained through the activities of YMA highly enlightened their ideas and knowledge and as a result “the Lushais aspired for something better”.⁵⁴ With the grant of permission to form political parties, there had been hectic activities for political attainment among the people. But the picture was blurred by a sense of uncertainty when India attained independence, the Mizos were uncertain of their political future in the sphere of integration to independent Indian Union.

In the meantime, however, certain other new factors helped in the formation of new political endeavour. Chiefs among them were; the lenient policy adopted by the British Government towards the Mizos due to the outbreak of the Second World War; the strong feeling that India would soon achieve her complete freedom from the British rule; that the Mizo people would soon be freed from the arbitrary rule of the

⁵³ P. Lalnithanga (2006), *Political Developments in Mizoram*, p. 6

⁵⁴ V. Venkata Rao (1976), *A Century of Tribal Politics in North East India*, p. 160.

chiefs as well as the heavy taxes levied on them and that the people would be relieved from the monotonous *puak phurh* (coolie labour). All these circumstances and concerns contributed to the increasing entry of the people into the political arena.

The political consciousness which grew among the people following the changed situation in Mizoram was soon to find its expression. Several other factors in this regard were hectic political activities in the neighboring areas of Assam and Bengal, ill-feelings between the chiefs and the commoners, slow and stagnant development activities adopted by the authority, etc. The general situation changed after the Second World War due to the fact that the British Government had to seek support from the Chiefs in their war efforts. In order to win over the Chiefs and the people, the authority changed their policy. Consequently, political as well as other restrictions which had been imposed earlier were relaxed and in 1946, just before Indian independence, the formation of political parties was permitted by the Superintendent. Thus, a new era dawned in the political history of the Mizo.

Apparently, the early educated Mizos were politically motivated since the passages of the Government of India Acts, 1919 and 1935 because these two Acts had given political aspirations to the early educated Mizos by giving special status to the people. The young educated Mizo boys knew they had to do something to achieve their future political aspirations. But the district authorities prohibited local residents from any political activity except that allowed by the authorities. So there was no question of starting any political activities without the permission of the authorities concerned. By 1930s, social organizations started to come up in the social life of the Mizos. With the permission and recognition of the Christian missionaries, the Young Lushai Association (YLA), which was later renamed as the Young Mizo Association (YMA) was founded on the 15th June, 1935.⁵⁵

⁵⁵ <https://centralyma.org/>. Accessed on 15th June, 2020.

The forming members of the YMA were Rev. David Edward, Upa D. Thianga, Rev. L. Evans, Upa Chawngzika, Miss Kattie Hughes (Pi Zaii), Pu Muka, Rev. Chhuahkhama, Pu Vankhuma, Pu L. Kailuia, Pu L. H. Liana, Upa Ch. Pasena.

By the time India achieved independence, education had already taken roots in the Lushai Hills through the activities of the Christian Missionaries. This alongside the increasing conversion of the populace to Christianity provided them with unarticulated sense of their rights and political dignity. The birth of **the Mizo Union** as a political party in 1946 **marked** the beginning of a long political struggle **for the Mizos**. The construction of Mizo National identity that developed in the mid-21st Century was the work of modern liberal Mizo middle class claimed by Sajal Nag, “this identity was based on cultural markers along with liberal, cosmopolitan and secular”.⁵⁶

2.1.2 Pre- Statehood of Mizoram

From the early 1930s, the Mizos became conscious of their political right which had been declined to them by their colonial rulers. The young early educated Mizos felt the need to form a united front to fight for their rights. With the eclipse of the British Empire imminent and active debates in the Provincial Legislature about the future of the Lushai Hills region, the first political party in Mizo country was born in 1946. In January 1946, the Superintendent through the exercise of his discretionary power ordered the election of a body of District Conference to advise him in matters of administration of customary laws.⁵⁷ This was a feeble semblance of a political body and can be said to be a precursor of unbridled political party of the people. Partly through the repercussion of repressive measures inflicted upon them and partly through the intellectual awakening, the idea of forming a political party had long been fostered by the educated intelligentsia. Mr. P. S. Dahrawka, an employee in the District Veterinary Office, was the brain behind the formation of the first political party i.e., Mizo Union.⁵⁸

⁵⁶ Sajal Nag (2008), *Pied Pipers in North- East India: Bamboo- flowers, Rat- famine and the Politics of Philanthropy (1881- 2007)*, p. 267.

⁵⁷ *Ibid.*, p. 56.

⁵⁸ *Ibid.*, p. 57.

Then the Mizo District witness the emergence of political parties over the years, leading to the formation of The United Mizo Freedom Organization (UMFO), also popularly known as 'Zalen Pawl' on 5th July, 1947 mainly to oppose the Mizo Union's decision to merge with the Indian Union.⁵⁹ The original objective of the UMFO was to join Burma with maximum autonomy. The party gained a wide support from the Mizo Chiefs as the Mizo Union was supporting the abolition of the institution of Chieftainship, but it could not gain popular support as majority of the masses were with the Mizo Union. One witness the formation of the first two political parties the Mizo Union and the UMFO was not based on ethnic or clan based, rather it was because of political suitability and a safeguard to Mizo tribalism.

In 1957, the Mizos for the first time, had a formal political relation with other from outside the Mizo District, leading to the formation of Eastern India Tribal Union (EITU) formed by the leaders of tribes from Jantia and Khasi Hills, the Garo Hills, the Mikir Hills, North Cachar Hills and the Mizo Hills met at Aizawl on May 30- June 1, 1957⁶⁰. As the Hill leaders of the Assam state demanded a separate Hill State for the Hills District of Assam, the 1954 Assam Hills Tribals Leaders Conference held at Tura passed a resolution for the creation of Hill state. The formation of EITU as a political party comprising of all the Hill tribes of Assam was done to protect the tribal ethnicity and to assert their autonomy in a larger democratic framework.

The introduction of the Assam Official Language Bill on 10th October 1960 led to the formation of the All-Party Hill Leaders' Conference (APHLC) mainly against the introduction of the Bill. Within six weeks of their first meeting in Shillong on 6–7 July, the APHLC submitted a memorandum to the President of India reviving the petition for secession from Assam as the only alternative to accepting Assamese as the official language of the state. Later, the APHLC began demanding

⁵⁹ R. Vanlawma (1972), *Ka Ram leh Kei (My Country and I)*, p. 199.

⁶⁰ L. H. Chhuanawma, Lalthakima, Lal Lawmzuali (2018), *Government and Politics of Mizoram*, p. 114.

separate hills state. The APHLC was the first and only all- hills organization- a platform rather than a political party.

The formation of Mizo Cultural Society in 1958⁶¹ with the objective of helping the Mizos during periodic *Mautam*⁶² that took place in the district in 1959, but with a hidden agenda of Mizo independence. Since the formation of this Society was done on the line of the formation of YMA, the membership strength of the youth among the government servants were increasing rapidly. According to C. Nunthara, the early stage of political development of Mizoram witness government officials took active part and participated in political actions⁶³. The Mizos anticipated the coming famine a year or two ahead by informing the district authorities, but they were disappointed with the short measures taken by the Assam government. As mentioned by Saprawnga who was the then Mizo District Council's Chief Executive, the Assam government refused to believe the predictions of famine by the Mizos, nor did not co-operate with the District Council authorities to ease the hardship.⁶⁴

Therefore, the Mizoram Cultural Society became a leader in expressing public grievances. It even changed its name during the famine to Mizo National Famine Front (MNFF), asserting the position of the leading voluntary organization in famine relief works. After famine was over, the society renamed itself as Mizo National Front (MNF) on 28th October, 1961 with an aim to fight independence of Mizoram from India.⁶⁵ It began to gain strength soon after 1962 general elections and emerged as the most powerful party in the district, mainly because of its dominant role during the Mautam famine, defeating all other parties in the bye-election of April, 1963.

The party began establishing a secret relation with Pakistan government from the late 1963. The arrest of the party President Laldenga and his lieutenant

⁶¹ R. Vanlawma (1972), op.cit., p. 257.

⁶² The word 'Mautam' is a periodic famine that broke out in Mizoram after every because of bamboo-flowering at the intervals of about 50 years.

⁶³ C. Nunthara (1996), op. cit., p. 140.

⁶⁴ Lalsangkima Pachuau (2012), *Ethnic Identity and Christianity*, p. 85.

⁶⁵ R. Vanlawma (1972), op.cit., p. 261.

Lalnunmawia in December 1963 at the Pakistan border by the Indian army, who were later on released proved the MNF preparation for armed insurgency. The zero hour of the “Operation Jericho”, the plan to declare independence from India through armed revolution was set on midnight of 28th February, 1966⁶⁶, by 5th March, all major towns except Aizawl fell to the hands of the MNF. This was followed by the declaration of the Mizo Hills District as “disturbed area” by Assam Government on 2nd March 1966 and the Armed Forces (Assam and Manipur) Special Powers Act 1958⁶⁷. At the same time, the MNF was declared ‘an unlawful organization’ by the Government of India to disable the underground MNF. On contrast to this, the Mizos had a strong sentimental attachment to the MNF as a symbol of Mizo identity.⁶⁸

Before 1966, Congress Party in Mizoram, which was founded in 1961 in the Mizo District was a negligible one, unable to gain public support as it was then considered as an alien party or so called ‘vai party’ and claiming the MNF stands for ethnic group solidarity of the Mizos posed a serious challenge to the Congress⁶⁹. With the MNF becoming a banned organization from 1966, the Congress was the only political party to pose challenge to the Mizo Union. During this time, the MNF also lend its support to the Congress due to its anti- Mizo Union attitude⁷⁰. The pro-MNF during insurgency preferred the Congress not because they had faith in all-India political party to solve the exiting Mizo problem, but to show their hostility to the Mizo Union.

The Congress party winning the 1984 legislative assembly election was mainly because of its promise to fulfill to bring stable peace and political stability in Mizoram, the signing of the famous ‘Peace Accord’ on 30th June, 1986 between the Indian Government and the MNF, and the successive setting up of coalition government between the Congress and the MNF in 1986 in which the then Congress

⁶⁶ K. Vanlalauva (2021), *Independene Puan leh Underground Sawrkar (Buaina Bul : A Dumpawl leh Intellectual)*, p. 2.

⁶⁷ J. V. Hluna (1985), op.cit., p. 98.

⁶⁸ Lalsangkima Pachuau (2012), op.cit., p. 93.

⁶⁹ C. Nunthara (1996), op. cit. p. 158.

⁷⁰ Ibid., p. 158.

CM Lal Thanhawla gave away his chief minister's post to the MNF is something worth mentioning in the political development of Mizoram.

One of the major impacts of insurgency was the violation of human rights of the Mizos by the Indian Army that led to the formation of Human Rights Committee on 22nd June, 1974 by Brig. T. Sailo was an important political development for the Mizos. As Human Rights Committee was seen as salvation from army atrocities by the masses; that led to the conversion of the Committee in to a political party known as People's Conference Party on 28th April, 1975⁷¹, after a year functioning as a non- political human rights advocate. Brig Thenphunga Sailo appeared to be an ideal figure in solve the political problem in Mizoram as he was a retired Brigadier from the Indian Army, and had a close connection with the MNF organization through his son, who was one of the 'captains' in the military wing of the organization, as he had connections with both the sides. The works done by the PC party and its leaders in upholding the human rights of the Mizos was one of the main reasons for the party to win the 1978 Union Territory Legislative Assembly Elections.

2.1.3 Post- Statehood of Mizoram

The post-peace accord politics and political developments have been dominated by two political parties namely the MNF and the Congress. Despite the political discourse being dominated by these two main parties, the post- accord politics of Mizoram witness the rise in importance of other smaller parties (both regional as well as national parties), NGOs including the Church and minority ethnic groups; all of them contributed in framing the political discourse⁷². This is clear from the last State Legislative Elections of 2018 where one witnessed the BJP getting one seat for the first time with a candidate from Chakma community; and the coming up of Zoram People's Movement (ZPM)- a coalition what was formed in order to keep the ruling Congress or the MNF out of power by securing 8 seats out of 40, in which

⁷¹ Kenneth Chawngliana (2002), *Mizoram Hruaitute Sulhnu*, p. 14.

⁷² Joy L. K. Pachuau (2022), "Ethnic Mobilization and Electoral Process: A Study of the Contours of Identity Making in Mizoram" in Jelle J. P. Wouters (ed.) *Vernacular Politics in Northeast India: Democracy, Ethnicity & Indigeneity*, p. 17.

6 seats were won within the capital Aizawl Constituency. Therefore, the ZPM gives the third front alternative front to the two main dominant parties. None the less, the role played to other smaller regional parties like the MPC, ZNP are worth noting when it comes to coalition politics in Mizoram.

Again, the recent role and political development of the BJP towards the minority ethnic groups like the Maras, the Chakmas and the Reangs is worth mentioning in the political discourse after the 2018 Assembly elections. The recent elections result in the three District Councils under the Sixth Schedule of the Constitution, especially in the 10th General Elections of Chakma Autonomous District Council (2018) and the 12th General Elections of the Mara District Council (2022) are the recent development that highlights identity politics in the state in the name of minority ethnic identity has been slowly promoted by the national party in the state.

2.2 Ethno- political historical evolution of Nagaland:

According to Charles Chasie, to trace Naga political history one must go back to the arrival of the British and their colonial settlements. The first British action that affected the Naga people was the Treaty of Yandabo in 1826, which while demarcating the boundary between India and Burma, caused the vivisection of Naga country...having salvaged the Manipur Kingdom, through the Treaty of Yandabo, and having demarcated the territorial boundaries, on the map, between that kingdom and the then Nowgong district in Assam, the British felt they needed to link up the two by a land route through Angami Naga territory. This led to the second major event and the first direct encounter of the British with the Naga people in 1832.⁷³

Though Assam and Manipur were brought under the suzerainty of the British India by the Treaty of Yandabo (Feb.1826), the Naga countries were outside the

⁷³ Charles Chasie (2000), *The Naga Imbroglia*, p. 29.

British Empire. This has to become a “historical gift” for inducing consciousness of their identity and rights, leading the Nagas towards broader worldview⁷⁴.

Before the British era, the independent spiring among the Naga villages on the line of defence and self- sufficiency in food grains kept the Nagas isolated from the outside world. The coming of the Britishers to the Naga Hills was in order to consolidate their positions in Manipur and Assam, and when it was consolidated, the colonial rulers felt it was necessary to keep the Nagas under their control.⁷⁵ In the late 1860s, a group of Ao Nagas coming down to the plains for trading encountered with a mission school in session and the press building next to the mission school⁷⁶. The encountered led to curiosity among them and the leaders among them came to the mission teacher and asked them to teach the children how to read and write. Frequent trading with the plains made them realised the advantage of reading and writing. Finally, Edward Clark, a missionary of the American Baptist Foreign Mission Society (ABMFS) obliged to enter the Naga Hills in Mokokchung District, and the first contact started since 1872.⁷⁷

Before the British entry into the Naga Hills, the ambitious Manipuri Raja Gumbheer Singh, wanted to permanently occupy and extend his rules over the, began military incursions into the Naga Hills. The Colonial rulers realizing a threat to its interest, made a proposal to Manipuri Raja that declared that the southern portion of the Naga Hills would be given away to Manipur⁷⁸. All these military incursions and arbitrary dividing of the hills by the colonial rules and the Manipuri king led to the resentment among the Angami Nagas especially who lived around the areas of arbitrary division of land, and the colonial rulers carried out no less that 10 miliary

⁷⁴ B. Henshet Phom (2021), *A Reading on the Traditional and Modern Electoral System in Nagaland with Reference to Konyaks, Aos and Phoms*, p. 72.

⁷⁵ V. Hotuko Jimomi (2009), *Political Parties in Nagaland*, p. 3.

⁷⁶ John Thomas, (2017), *Evangelising the Nation: Religion and the formation of Naga Political Identity*, p. 11.

⁷⁷ *Ibid.*, p. 11

⁷⁸ *Ibid.*, p. 13.

expeditions in the Naga areas from 1830s to 1850s, finally asserting their authority over the Angamis in 1866.⁷⁹

Amidst the resistance, the British officials realised it was difficult to subdue and pacify the Nagas on military means, they considered it was essential that efforts to be made to ‘humanise’ and ‘civilise’ the tribals so that they became ‘disciplined and obedient subjects of the colonial empire’⁸⁰. Therefore, the Chief Commissioner Jenkins extended invitation to the Baptist Missionary Society (BMS), but because of lack of resources the BMS couldn’t fulfil the invitation, but the American Baptist who already worked in Burma took this as an opportunity came to work in Assam in 1836 under the American Baptist Foreign Mission Society (ABMFS).

2.2.1 British Era

In the following years, American Baptist Missionaries carried out their mission works among the other Naga tribes as well with the support of the colonial rule in the Naga Hills. Many colonial administrators in the region supported the missionary project and portrait it as ‘a pacifying enterprise and benefit out of it in many of the administration works. Naga areas under the direct control of British administration in the 19th Century were identified as ‘administered or protected areas’, which made the British began to move into the interior Kohimas by 1878⁸¹. The British started occupying the Lotha tribe areas of Wokha in 1878, extending their control over the Ao and Semas vilages in the 1880s, putting them and divided them under different district administrators, eg- After the annexation of Angami & Lotha villages, Kohima was established as the chief administrative centre and a sub-division at Wokha under the charge if sub- divisional officer.

The British administration divided the Nagas without their consent with the claim of administrative convenience. But many writers claim that this was not the reason. Ihezhe Zhimomi, ex- Minister of Nagaland claims that

⁷⁹ Ibid., p. 21.

⁸⁰ Ibid., p. 13.

⁸¹ Ibid., p. 21.

“In the 19th Century and early 20th Century, the British Frontier Rulers or Administrators, Military Generals, Political Correspondents and Journalists recorded that they divided the Nagas for administrative conveniences. In reality, however, this assertion is misleading. In fact, they feared keeping the Nagas under one administrative umbrella.....This assessment was in the context of the different Angami villages with whom they clashed for nearly half a century (1832- 1880). They knew that many aggressive tribes were still unvisited and these villages were waiting to challenge their advance. They found it a difficult task to subjugate the Naga warriors, on their journey towards South East Asia for political, economic and military aggrandizement. Hence, they brought about the outward division of Nagas, purportedly for administrative conveniences. Inwardly, their apprehension of the Naga warriors made them divide the Nagas into Naga Hills District, portions of Naga territory were clubbed with Manipur state and with Kachar District in Assam, with Burma and a fifth group clubbed together as Free Naga territories or unadministered territories. In those days, the Nagas were oblivious of the ploy of foreigners who were dividing them with the object of ruling over them. They were concerned only with fights for supremacy and maintaining the integrity and sovereignty of their villages”⁸².

During World War I in 1917 over 2000 Nagas from all tribes were deployed in the war theaters in Europe as part of the Labor Corps⁸³. Out of this total number, the Sema tribe alone constituted 1000 corps. On the way to France, the ship was damaged by the enemy and their ship sank. Hundreds of other volunteers (British, Chinese, Ceylonese, etc.) were seriously injured, but the usual firmness and equanimity of the Naga spirit kept a steady pace and extended a helping hand to other shattered companions. This left a deep impression on the Nagas and they developed a nationalistic notion that they were one race and there was an internal compulsion for unity for greater altruistic service. Thus, on their return in June 1918, the traction authorities, ex-soldiers and members of various villages formed an

⁸² Ihezhe Zhimomi (2021), *A Brief Survey of Naga History*, p. 97.

⁸³ *Ibid.*, p. 99.

association known as the 'Naga Club'. The Club was political in nature, social in welfare and recreational in game and sports.⁸⁴

Regarding the fighting for political space in the context of Nagaland, the demand for self- governance was made early as 1929, when the first political organization named Naga Club submitted a memorandum to Simon Commission while visiting Kohima demanding that Nagas should be 'left alone' when the British decide to leave India.⁸⁵ Then the Naga National Council (NNC) was formed in March 1945 to represent the aspirations of the Nagas. Its representatives met the Cabinet Mission in April 1946 and claimed that they did not agree to any constitutional provision of the Indian constitution. A nine-point agreement was reached that recognized the characteristic of the Naga nation and gave the latter a ten-year period to decide whether to join the Indian Union or gain independence.

2.2.2 Pre- Statehood of Nagaland

The NNC launched a plebiscite in 1951 and 99% voted for the separate homeland. A copy of the result was also handed over to Pandit Jawaharlal Nehru on March 11, 1952 at Silghat, Assam. Easterine Iralu says:

And after A.Z. Phizo was elected President of the Naga national Council, the NNC inaugurated a Plebiscite on the issue of Naga Independence at Kohima on May 16, 1951. On this day, 7000 men and women were reported to have given their thumbprints. All the villages in the Naga Hills were visited, signatures and thumbprints were taken. Oath were administered in the traditional manner to fight for Naga Independence.⁸⁶

⁸⁴ B. Henshet Phom (2021), op.cit. p. 75.

⁸⁵ Sajal Nag (2000), "Construction of Nationhood: Ethnic Minorities secessionism and Legitimization in North East India" in Girin Phukon (ed.), *Political Dynamics of North East India*, p. 30.

⁸⁶ Iralu Easterine Kire, *A Historical and Geographical Study of Nagaland*, Vol. II, Directorate of School Education, Nagaland, Kohima, 1985-86, 94-95.

In the weeks that followed, the political situation escalated throughout the Naga Hills as people expressed support for Naga independence and resentment against Indian rule or interference in Naga affairs. From 1952, the relationship between the Nagas and the Indian government gradually deteriorated.⁸⁷ In 1952, the Nagas boycotted the first Indian Parliamentary election. No Nagas sought election to the Parliament or the Legislative Assembly in Assam and no District Council was set up. No Naga voter exercised his right to vote. Thus, the first two general elections in 1952 and 1957 were boycotted by Nagas and violence erupted in the Naga Hills.

In March 1956, the NNC founded the Naga Federal Government (NFG) and continued for freedom struggle and declared the formation of 'Naga Federal Republic' as a sovereign state on 22nd March 1956 with its flag was hoisting, under the leadership of the Naga National Council.⁸⁸ The NNC contested for a separate homeland for the Nagas from Naga inhabited areas in Assam and Myanmar. The Council framed constitution for federal government

Nagaland is a people's sovereign republic. This has been so from time immemorial. There shall be a parliament with strength of 100 *Tatars* (MPs), the President will be elected by the people and his cabinet will consist of fifteen *Kilonsers* (Ministers).⁸⁹

In 1957, the Naga people convened an All-Tribes Naga People's Convention at Kohima. The purpose of organizing the congress was to function as a means of communication between the Government of India and the Naga rebels. It was held from August 22 to 26, 1957 and attended by more than 1760 delegates and over 2000 visitors from every Naga tribe. Dr. Imkongliba Ao was the President of the Convention and Mr. Jasokie, its secretary. For the first time since the hostilities began the Naga people voiced their opposition to violence. The main resolutions of the convention were to advocate settlement of the Naga issue through peaceful negotiation. It resolved that the Naga Hills district of Assam and Tuensang division

⁸⁷ Ibid., p. 95.

⁸⁸ B. Henshet Phom (2021), op. cit., p. 80.

⁸⁹ Ibid., p. 104.

of North Eastern Frontier Agency (NEFA) be constituted into a single administrative unit under the External Affairs Ministry. This led to the formation of the Naga Hills Tuensang Area (NHTA).⁹⁰

The second Naga People's Convention was held in May 1958, at the Ao village of Ungma in Mokokchung district, and the Convention appointed a Liaison Committee to contact the Underground Nagas but there was no forthcoming response from their side.⁹¹ A Drafting Committee was appointed to formulate their demands. The Committee drafted a 16 points memorandum for the constitution of a separate state, 'Nagaland' within the Indian Union. It was at the third session of the NPC held at Mokokchung from October 22 to 26, 1959 that the 16 points memorandum was passed by the convention and submitted to the Prime Minister of India in June 1960. A full deliberation was made between the Government of India and the Naga People's Convention for which the Memorandum was passed.⁹²

2.2.3 Post- Statehood of Nagaland

In pursuance to this historic Agreement, the Nagaland (Transitional Provision) regulation 1961 was promulgated in February, 1961 and Naga Hills Tuensang Area (NHTA) was christened as Nagaland⁹³. An Interim Body of 42 members was constituted. This was to function as the de-facto legislature. Dr. Imkongliba Ao the first Chairman of the Naga People's Convention, was appointed the first Chairman of the Interim Body. Mr. P. Shilu was appointed the Chief Executive Councillor and eventually became the first Chief Minister of Nagaland.⁹⁴ The members of the Interim Body were chosen by consensus on the basis of their knowledge and experience, not on the basis of the adult franchise.

Following the Sixteen Point Proposal with certain modifications, On August 21, 1962 the then Prime Minister Pandit Nehru introduced a Bill in the Parliament for

⁹⁰ B. Henshet Phom (2021), op.cit., p. 82.

⁹¹ Ibid., p. 86.

⁹² Kuhoi K. Zhimomi (2004), *Politics and Militancy in Nagaland*, pp. 74-75.

⁹³ Iralu Easterine Kire , op.cit., 108.

⁹⁴ B. Henshet Phom (2021), op.cit., p. 83.

the formation of Nagaland as a full-fledged State.⁹⁵ Parliament passed the Thirteenth Constitution Amendment Bill and the President of India assented to these bills on September 4, 1962. The tenure of the interim Body expired on November 30, 1963 whereupon a new state 'Nagaland' came into existence as the sixteenth state of the Indian Union. The new state was formally inaugurated by the President of India Dr. Radhakrishnan on December 1, 1963. According to M. Horam:

Beginning with the attainment of Nagaland state, Nagaland Legislative Assembly was also created, and this was certainly a sudden jump from tribal polity to modern sophisticated political system, a new experience for the Nagas.⁹⁶

The interim government had set up Tribal Councils, Area Councils and Village Councils within three years of its rule. For the first State Legislative Assembly Elections of 1964, the Chairmen of the Tribal Councils called for their respective GBs, meetings of public leaders and held '*Hohos*'⁹⁷ to elect their representatives leading to a public meeting in November 1963 to elect representatives.⁹⁸ The first elected government in the state of Nagaland was formed in the first week of February 1964. P. Shilo Ao became the chief minister, along with six cabinet ministers and a one deputy chief minister.

Along with time, in order to bring permanent peace in the state, Church played an active role between the Federal Government of Nagaland (the underground) and the Government of India, leaders like Rev Longri Ao and Kenneth Angami were actively involved. They met the leaders of the FGN and the FGN accepted the proposal on one condition that a Peace Mission should be constituted with one representative from the United Nations as one of the members. For this, the Church leaders approached the Government of India for a ceasefire agreement. The proposed ceasefire agreement was accepted, signed and came into force on

⁹⁵ Ibid., p. 83.

⁹⁶ M Horam (1988), *Nagas Old Ways and New Trend*, p. 110.

⁹⁷ an apex body of Naga tribes

⁹⁸ Ihezhe Zhimomi (2021), *op.cit.*, p. 177.

September 6, 1964; Peace Mission was formed with B. P. Chahila, Jayprakash Narayan and Michael Scott, a British citizen as its members.⁹⁹

The members of the Peace Mission, after several rounds of meeting with both the delegates of the FGN and the Government of India submitted its 17 points proposal on December 20, 1964, and the crux of the proposal was to have peace talks between the two groups. But the observation made by the Peace Mission in the proposal that stated that Naga Hills was a part of British- India that after they left, Naga hills became a part and parcel of India could not be accepted by the FGN nor by the public. This led to create doubts to the Peace Mission members, the FGN decided to have direct talks with the Government of India, thereby leading to the dissolution of the Peace Mission.

By 1974, the democratic set up of the state became much stable and the interest and involvement of the masses in the state politics had increase to a great extent. The failure of the peace talks and the growth of Naga politics had given a set back to the rebels leading to dissention in the NFG, rivalry and jealousy arise because of power and position. It has become clear that politics of militancy was losing its ground. According to Kohoi Zhimomi, it was mainly because of two reasons- firstly, the growth of democratic processes in Nagaland and the growing interest of the Naga electorate in party politics had gained popularity than militancy among the masses; secondly, despite the constant struggle for Naga independence, no positive results was yielded.¹⁰⁰

During the period of President's Rule in 1975, Naga politics witnessed some effective results as the law-and-order situation became more improved and the Government officials were found more disciplined. The famous 'Shillong Accord' was signed¹⁰¹ during this period between the representatives of the underground Nagas and the Government of India to end militancy. During this time, the NNO had

⁹⁹ Ibid., p. 178.

¹⁰⁰ Kohoi K. Zhimomi (2004), op.cit., p. 122.

¹⁰¹ Ibid., p. 125

merger with the Indian Congress with the expectation that it would get victory in the elections to be held after the lifting of emergency from the State.

From March 1980, the Naga politics took a series of dramatic changes in quick succession. Political parties were being formed overnight; new parties emerged by defections. The Shillong Accord and surrendering of the rebel Nagas with arms was welcomed by the public and the government, but real peace was still a dream as some of the militants did not welcome the Accord. On 31st January, 1980, a group of Naga rebels headed by Isaac Swu, TH Muivah and Khaplang rejecting the Shillong Accord, formed a new organization named “Nationalist Socialist Council of Nagaland (NSCN).¹⁰² The NSCN denounced the leadership of Phizo and broke all relations with Federal Government led by Phizo. There was a further division within the organization, leading to a split between the two leaders Khaplang and Isaac, known as NSCN (K) and NSCN (IM). The main reason for the split of the NSCN was tribalism¹⁰³; Muivah is a Tangkhul Naga from Manipur, while Khaplang is a Myanmar Naga and Isaac Swu is a Sema Naga.

Politics and elections in Nagaland have been in sync with insurgency and insurgent movements leading to the increased role of the NSCN- IM in the state politics. At the same time, permanent political solution has been a long-desired goal by the people of Nagaland. There have been nearly 100 rounds of talk. Therefore, a ‘Framework Agreement’ was signed between the NSCN and the Government of India on 3rd August, 2015 to have permanent peace in Nagaland¹⁰⁴. Prior to this, ‘Ceasefire Agreement’ between the two groups was signed in 1997, the two have been holding talks since then, while a conglomerate of seven different Naga national political groups (NNPGs) also got into separate talks with the Centre since 2017. However, the NSCN (IM)’s demand for ‘**a separate Naga flag**

¹⁰² Ibid., p. 136.

¹⁰³ Ibid., p. 141.

¹⁰⁴ Rahul Karma (May 26, 2022), ‘NSCN (I-M) rigid as government pushes for solution to Naga Peace Process’, <https://www.thehindu.com/news/national/other-states/nscn-i-m-rigid-as-govt-pushes-for-solution-to-naga-peace-process/article65463871>. Access on 27. 05. 2022.

and a constitution' has been a delaying factor in signing a final deal on the protracted Naga political issue.

When dealing with the issue of identity politics and the role of political parties, Dr. S.C Jamir, former Chief Minister of Nagaland and veteran Congress Party leader explained that he understood identity of Naga in two perspectives- Naga identity and later on, the adoption of Christian identity¹⁰⁵. These two factors influenced and fuelled up the development of political parties and factions and defections within the political parties often took place because of identity issues.

The decline of the dominance of the Congress party in Nagaland politics since 1997, the emergence of the regional parties and the recent entry of the BJP in the state politics of Nagaland since 2018 are some of the recent political trends among the Nagas. The regional parties, who claimed to be Nagas as sovereign and supports the stand of the Naga national movements are in allies with the BJP and formed coalition government known as Democratic Alliance of Nagaland (DAN).

2.3 State formation of Mizoram and Nagaland:

In India, state formation is mainly done on the line of regional aspirants of the local and intermediate rulers. But it is a different case in north- east India. State formation was done mainly on the basis of ethnic/ tribal representation and on the line of insurgency. Whereas in the rest of India, language was one of the main criteria of state formation and state re-organization.¹⁰⁶ In the case of Mizoram, state formation was done on the line of ethnicity and insurgency that resulted in complete peace accord signed between the then underground MNF and the Government of India, same in the case of Nagaland, but state formation could not result in complete peace process. The state formation led to further insurgency by the then NNC and NSCN. These two states witness the emergence of ethnic politics because of identity

¹⁰⁵ Personal interview of Dr. S. C. Jamir at his residence in Dimapur, Nagaland on 10th December, 2021.

¹⁰⁶ In 1956, as a part of the States Reorganization Act, the states in India were arranged on linguistic basis.

politics and insurgency. Some of the smaller political parties were formed on the basis of ethnic identity, and in both the states, identity politics have grown in the framework of ethnic community and identity.

State formation of Mizoram and Nagaland under the Constitution of India (Article 371- G and Article 371- A) is analyzed in the following sub- themes.

2.3.1 Formation of the State of Mizoram under the Constitution of India

State formation was done mainly on the basis of ethnic/ tribal representation and on the line of insurgency. To contain the spread of insurgency, agreement was signed between the Government of India and the MNF known as ‘Memorandum of Settlement’ or the Peace Accord 1986’. This state formation has led to the end of insurgency in Mizoram.

The creation of Mizoram as the 23rd state of the Indian Union was recognized under Article 371-G of the Constitution.¹⁰⁷

Special provision with respect to the State of Mizoram Notwithstanding anything in this Constitution,

(a) No Act of President in respect of

- religious or social practices of the Mizos,
- Mizo customary law and procedure,
- administration of civil and criminal justice involving decisions according to Mizo customary law,
- ownership and transfer of land, shall apply to the State of Mizoram unless the Legislative Assembly of the State of Mizoram by a resolution so decides: Provided that nothing in this clause shall apply to any Central Act in force in the union territory of Mizoram immediately before the commencement of the Constitution (Fifty third Amendment) Act, 1986;

(b) the Legislative Assembly of the State of Mizoram shall consist of not less than forty members.

¹⁰⁷ <https://indiankanoon.org/doc/1184172/>. Accessed on 31 March, 2021.

2.3.2 Formation of the State of Nagaland under the Constitution of India

The creation of the state of Nagaland, having constitutional status under Article 371-A of the Constitution provides special status and privileges to protect the interest of the tribals.¹⁰⁸

Special provision with respect to the State of Nagaland

(1) Notwithstanding anything in this Constitution,

(a) no Act of Parliament in respect of

(i) religious or social practices of the Nagas,

(ii) Naga customary law and procedure,

(iii) administration of civil and criminal justice involving decisions according to Naga customary law,

(iv) ownership and transfer of land and its resources, shall apply to the State of Nagaland unless the Legislative Assembly of Nagaland by a resolution so decides;

(b) the Governor of Nagaland shall have special responsibility with respect to law and order in the State of Nagaland for so long as in his opinion internal disturbances occurring in the Naga Hills Tuensang Area immediately before the formation of that State continue therein or in any part thereof and in the discharge of his functions in relation thereto the Governor shall, after consulting the Council of Ministers, exercise his individual judgment as to the action to be taken: Provided that if any question arises whether any matter is or is not a matter as respects which the Governor is under this sub clause required to act in the exercise of his individual judgment, the decision of the Governor in his discretion shall be final, and the validity of anything done by the Governor shall not be called in question on the ground that he ought or ought not to have acted in the exercise of his individual judgment: Provided further that if the President on receipt of a report from the Governor or otherwise is satisfied that it is no longer necessary for the Governor to have special responsibility with respect to law and order in the State of Nagaland, he may by order direct that the Governor shall cease to have such responsibility with effect from such date as may be specified in the order;

¹⁰⁸ <https://indiankanoon.org/doc/371998/>. Accessed on 31 March, 2021.

(c) in making his recommendation with respect to any demand for a grant, the Governor of Nagaland shall ensure that any money provided by the Government of India out of the Consolidated Fund of India for any specific service or purpose is included in the demand for a grant relating to that service or purpose and not in any other demand;

(d) as from such date as the Governor of Nagaland may by public notification in this behalf specify, there shall be established a regional council for the Tuensang district consisting of thirty-five members and the Governor shall in his discretion make rules providing for

(i) the composition of the regional council and the manner in which the members of the regional council shall be chosen: Provided that the Deputy Commissioner of the Tuensang district shall be the Chairman ex officio of the regional council and the Vice Chairman of the regional council shall be elected by the members thereof from amongst themselves;

(ii) the qualifications for being chosen as, and for being, members of the regional council;

(iii) the term of office of, and the salaries and allowances, if any, to be paid to members of, the regional council;

(iv) the procedure and conduct of business of the regional council;

(v) the appointment of officers and staff of the regional council and their conditions of services; and

(vi) any other matter in respect of which it is necessary to make rules for the constitution and proper functioning of the regional council

(2) Notwithstanding anything in this Constitution, for a period of ten years from the date of the formation of the State of Nagaland or for such further period as the Governor may, on the recommendation of the regional council, by public notification specify in this behalf,

(a) the administration of the Tuensang district shall be carried on by the Governor;

(b) where any money is provided by the Government of India to the Government of Nagaland to meet the requirements of the State of Nagaland as a whole, the Governor shall in his discretion arrange for an equitable allocation of that money between the Tuensang district and the rest of the State;

(c) no Act of the Legislature of Nagaland shall apply to the Tuensang district unless the Governor, on the recommendation of the regional council, by public notification so directs and the Governor in giving such direction with respect to any such Act may direct that the Act shall in its application to the Tuensang district or any part thereof have effect subject to such exceptions or modifications as the Governor may specify on the recommendation of the regional council: Provided that any direction given under this sub clause may be given so as to have retrospective effect;

(d) the Governor may make regulations for the peace, progress and good government of the Tuensang district and any regulations so made may repeal or amend with retrospective effect, if necessary, any Act of Parliament or any other law which is for the time being applicable to that district;

(e)

(i) one of the members representing the Tuensang district in the Legislative Assembly of Nagaland shall be appointed Minister for Tuensang affairs by the Governor on the advice of the Chief Minister and the Chief Minister in tendering his advice shall act on the recommendation of the majority of the members as aforesaid;

(ii) the Minister for Tuensang affairs shall deal with, and have direct access to the Governor on, all matters relating to the Tuensang district but he shall keep the Chief Minister informed about the same;

(f) notwithstanding anything in the foregoing provisions of this clause, the final decision on all matters relating to the Tuensang district shall be made by the Governor in his discretion;

(g) in articles 54 and 55 and clause (4) of Article 80, references to the elected members of the Legislative Assembly of a State or to each such member shall include references to the members or member of the Legislative Assembly of Nagaland elected by the regional council established under this article;

(h) in Article 170

(i) clause (1) shall, in relation to the Legislative Assembly of Nagaland, have effect as if for the word sixty, the words forty-six had been substituted;

(ii) in the said clause, the reference to direct election from territorial constituencies in the State shall include election by the members of the regional council established under this article;

(iii) in clauses (2) and (3), references to territorial constituencies shall mean references to territorial constituencies in the Kohima and Mokokchung districts.

The Chapter discussed the ethno-political evolution of Mizoram and Nagaland. It presented the ethno-cultural and political profiles of both states. It traced the historical evolution, formation and history of insurgency in both states. The study found that ethno-political set-ups play a crucial role in the identity politics in both states. It highlighted the links between the ethno-political evolution and identity politics in both states. It examined the background of ethno-political set-ups of both states and the history of identity politics in both states. The ethno-political evolution is ongoing process in both states. It determines to the identity political developments in both states.

2.4 Comparison of the State Formation of Mizoram and Nagaland under Article 371 (A) and 371 (G) of the Indian Constitution

Both Nagaland and Mizoram were formed in the line of ethnicity and in order to addressing the insurgency. These two states had gone through insurgency. And attained their respective statehood as end product of the insurgency. One similarity between the state formation in Mizoram and Nagaland is that the objective of the state formation is to end political instability in the state, and one can argue this as one of the mechanisms to end insurgency in both the states.

The state formation in Mizoram is the direct outcome of the 'Peace Accord signed between the underground MNF and the Indian Government. The state formation of Nagaland was the outcome of the '16 Points Agreement' submitted by the representatives of Naga People's Conventions Memorandum and the Government of India. Another opposite striking feature of the State formation in both the states is that the signing of Peace Accord and attainment of statehood in Mizoram has ended political instability, whereas for the case of Nagaland, the attainment of Statehood did not end political instability. This is still a continuing pertaining political issue across all political parties. Overviewing the historical process of state formation in

both states, it can be concluded that the state formation was done mainly on the basis of ethnic/ tribal representation and on the line of insurgency.

To contain the spread of insurgency, agreement was signed between the Government of India and the MNF known as 'Memorandum of Settlement' or the Peace Accord 1986'. This state formation has led to the end of insurgency in Mizoram. As per the Accord, the conferment of statehood to the Mizoram Union Territory was done by the Government of India by introducing 'The Mizoram Statehood Bill 1986' through the 53rd Constitutional Amendment Bill of the 14th August, 1986¹⁰⁹. This includes special safeguards and provisions for Mizoram Legislative Assembly with forty elective seats.¹¹⁰

The formation of Autonomous District Council (ADC) under the Sixth Schedule of the Constitution for the ethnic minorities in the southern part of Mizoram. Three ADCs as Mara Autonomous District Council with its headquarter at Saiha, Lai Autonomous District Council with its headquarter at Lawngtlai, and Chakma Autonomous District Council with its headquarter at Chawngte were formed in Mizoram state. These ADCs were results of the status of Union Territory of Mizoram in 1971 following the North- East States Re- Organization Act of 1971. In the case of Nagaland, Special Provision for the creation of regional council lies in the hands of the Governor of Nagaland for Tuensang District consisting of thirty- five members.

The state formation of Mizoram a signing of Memorandum of Understanding (MoU) between the MNF and the Government of India in 1986; whereas the state formation of Nagaland in 1963 was the Cabinet decision (16 points proposal accepted by the Central Government) that Parliament implemented. It was an instrument of agreement between Naga People's Convention and the Government of India.

¹⁰⁹ Dr Lalthakima (2013), "M. N. F. movement in Mizoram", in Malsawmdawngliana and Rohmingmawii (eds.), *Mizo Narratives: Accounts from Mizoram*, p. 303.

¹¹⁰ Ibid.,

Before state formation of the two states, Mizoram was a Union Territory. For Nagaland, it was a hill district in the pre- state formation under Assam, and state boundaries were re- arranged on the basis of ethnicity. The process of state formation in Mizoram and Nagaland on the line of ethnic political grounds and insurgency and the reasons of not ending insurgency in Nagaland till today is a question to be ponder upon.

For the case of Mizoram, the ethnic politics forces that led to the end of insurgency and the successfully functioning of the statehood can be analysed as the following. Firstly, the three Autonomous District Councils in Mizoram play an important role post- insurgent period in the fulfilment of the aspirations of the ethnic minorities. Secondly, the internal Mizoisation¹¹¹, that was seen as backward during the twenty years period of insurgency resurfaced again after the formation of statehood in Mizoram. The identity and culture of the Mizos are intertwined with the political process of Mizoram. In other words, the history of the process of Mizoisation owes much to the politics of identity and culture of the people of the State as claimed by Professor J. K. Patnaik¹¹²; Among the numerous layers of identity formation, geographical identity is prominent besides the primordial identity. The geographical shaped identity has shaped the language identity and this has been seen as the issue of incorporating the Mizo language in the Eight Schedule of the Constitution in the post- Accord time. The state of Mizoram was now identified with Christianity and a Zo ethnic community consisting of several sub-tribes, the dominant group being the Lushais. The other smaller groups like Mara, Lai, Chakma, Hmar and others have come to accept the umbrella identity that would cater to the larger interest of these smaller clans and sub-tribes.¹¹³

¹¹¹ The term Mizoisation as termed by Prof J.K Patnaik explains about the racial and cultural differences contributed to the augmentation of the self-identity through the process of Mizoisation. It is an effort among the Mizo to maintain a separate identity started in the post- colonial time.

¹¹² J. K. Patnaik (2016), 'Mizo Identity and Indianisation: A Case of Conflict Transformation in Mizoram', *Indian Journal of Public Administration*, Vol. IXII, No. 3. July- September, p. 625.

¹¹³ *Ibid.* p. 623.

Mizo identity has been constructed to rally round all diverse elements of Zo-Chin ethnic communities for cultural and political purposes, the interventions of Indian state further consolidated the Mizo identity.¹¹⁴ But this is not the case of Nagaland, the signing of the 16- Points Agreement that led to the formation of Statehood in 1963, and the subsequent signing of Shillong Accord in 1975 did not assert one identity among the different sub- tribes of Nagaland, even different political parties and political development in the state failed to bring the one- Naga identity and the extreme form of Naga identity assertion in the name of insurgency still continues till today.

Inner Line Permit (ILP) regime as per the Bengal Eastern Frontier Regulation 1873 has been in force in the entire state of Mizoram and this has not been changed since the political development of the elevation of District Council of the Lushai Hills into Union Territory Status in 1971 and the formation of Statehood in 1987. For the case of Nagaland, Dimapur, the commercial city of the state was not under the Inner Line permit regime unlike the rest of the state since the state formation in 1963. Recently, with the view of implementing Citizenship Amendment Bill 2019, the Nagaland Government has extended ILP regime to Dimapur district with an official notification on the 9th December, 2019¹¹⁵ . The ILP regime is applicable under the Bengal Eastern Frontier Regulation, 1873. In terms of Section 2 of the Bengal Eastern Frontier Regulations, 1873, citizens of other states require ILP for visiting these states; the main purpose is to prevent the settlement of the outsiders and the non- indigenous in the two states to protect the indigenous populations economically and socially.

¹¹⁴ Ibid. p. 634.

¹¹⁵ <https://economictimes.indiatimes.com/news/politics-and-nation/nagaland-brings-dimapur-under-inner-line-permit-regime/articleshow/72474268.cms?from=mdr>, "Nagaland Brings Dimapur under Inner Line Permit Regime" on 11th December, 2019, Retrieved on 11th January, 2023.

Additional details of the comparison between Mizoram and Nagaland with regard to state formation is shown below:

Table 2.1. State formation: comparison between Mizoram and Nagaland

SN	Content	Mizoram	Nagaland
1.	State Formation	1986	1963
2.	State Formation	Direct outcome of the Peace Accord signed between the underground MNF and the Indian Government	The outcome of the '16 Points Agreement' submitted by the representatives of Naga People's Conventions Memorandum and the Government of India.
3.	Insurgency	End of insurgency and development of political stability.	Insurgency still continued after state formation.
4.	Autonomy provision	Formation of the 3 Autonomous District Councils under the 6 th Schedule of the Constitution.	Special Provision for the creation of regional council lies in the hands of the Governor of Nagaland for Tuensang District consisting of thirty- five members.
5.	Instrument of State formation	Memorandum of Understanding (MoU) between the MNF and the Government of India	the Cabinet decision (16 points proposal accepted by the Central Government) that

			Parliament implemented
6.	Pre-state status	Status of Union Territory	Status of Hill District under Assam
7.	Post-statehood: Identity formation	The process of Mizoisation as one identity on the lines of Mizo & Christianity.	No similar identity formation could be achieved, as Nagas are identified along their sub-ethnic tribes identity rather than Naga identity as a whole.
8.	Special status under Article 371	ILP in force in the entire state of Mizoram.	ILP in force except in Dimapur till 2019.

Chapter III: Evolution of Political Parties in Mizoram and Nagaland

The focus of this chapter revolves around in the genesis of the formation of political parties in the two states, the basis of identity politics and the role played by the political parties in promoting the ethnic identity. The previous chapter titled “Mizoram and Nagaland: An Ethno- Political Overview” discussed the starting of colonial rule in the pre- independent era, political consciousness and the state formation.

3.1 Political Parties in Mizoram:

3.1.1 Mizo Union Party

The first political party formed on 9th April, 1946 by R. Vanlawma and it was first called as the ‘Mizo Common People Union’, but was later called ‘the Mizo Commoners Union’,¹¹⁶ Vanlawma became the first General Secretary of the party, while Lalbuaia and Hrangiaia were Adhoc Committee members. The draft

¹¹⁶ R. Vanlawma (1972), *Ka Ram leh Kei (My Country and I)*, p. 137

constitution of the party was drafted by R. Vanlawma and Dahrawka. The name of the Party was subsequently changed into the 'Mizo Union'.¹¹⁷

The party elected its first office bearers on 24th May, 1946 in its first conference of the party. Pachhunga, a well-known trader and merchant, became its first president and Lalhema, a petty- shop owner was elected vice-president, R. Vanlawma was the General Secretary and Lalbuaia the assistant secretary and Lalhmingthanga became the finance secretary and Thanga, a government employee, was the treasurer of the party.¹¹⁸ Political activity in the party began when there was a demand to replace the *Upas* appointed by the leaders with members elected by the people at the first general meeting held in Aizawl in September 1946. Within a very short span, the Mizo Union gathered momentum and support came from all corners except traditional elites.

In the first General Assembly, a bold resolution was taken demanding for two third representations on the District Conference by the elected members from the common people instead of equal representatives from the chiefs and the commoners. After a long deliberation over the issue of the future status of the Lushai Hills, the Assembly resolved the Hill district to be a part of Assam state; they were opposed to the retention of their district as an excluded area under an Independent India, but wished to be included in the Provincial Legislature with a sufficient number of representatives who would represent them on concurrent subjects with the Provincial Government. In this resolution, the party also mentioned its desire to bring all the neighboring territories inhabited by the ethnic group of Mizo under the fold of the Mizo District.

The Mizo Union retained popular support in Mizoram till the early seventies of the twentieth century. It won the District Council elections of 1952, 1957, and 1962 and even in 1966 when the political scenario became explosive because of the armed revolt of the Mizo National Front (MNF).

¹¹⁷ Ibid., p. 137.

¹¹⁸ Ibid., p. 138.

One of the notable activities of the Mizo Union Party was its persistent movement for the abolition of the Chiefs' indigenous administration. In consequence, the government of Assam abolished Chieftainship by a legislation called "The Lushai Hills (Acquisition of Chiefs' Rights) Act, 1954 which came into force on 1st April, 1954 within the jurisdiction of Lushai Hills District Council and on 15th April, 1954, in the area under the Pawi- Lakher Council of the Lushai Hills District.¹¹⁹ And the responsibility so long shouldered by the chiefs was taken over by the District and Regional Councils. The Mizo Union dominated Lushai Hills District Council already enacted "The Lushai Hills District (Village Council) Act, 1953 (Act No. V of 1953). Under the provision of the act, the first Village Council elections were completed on 24th July, 1954 in which the Mizo Union captured all the Village Councils. Therefore, the indigenous administration of chiefs was replaced by the Village Council administration at the singular initiative of the Mizo Union as a regional party.

Again, it was the Mizo Union, by its constant persuasion, that the name of the Lushai Hills District was changed to Mizo District by an act of Parliament called "The Lushai Hills District (Change of Name) Act, 1954 (Act 18 of 1954) which came into effective from 29th April, 1954¹²⁰. Following the change of name of the district the identity of the people was subsequently changed from 'Lushai' to 'Mizo'.

The Mizo Union being the majority in the District Council transferred the payment of *Fathang*¹²¹ at a reduced rate to the District Council as land revenue after the abolition of chieftainship and also stopped payment of some other dues that were practiced during the Chiefs' governance. It also modified the indigenous practice of inheritance of property by extending the right to women also. All these were done by the Mizo Union through the Lushai Hills District Council (Mizo District Council) by getting legislation enacted during 1953- 1956.¹²²

¹¹⁹ C. R. Nag (1999), *Post-Colonial Mizo Politics*, p. 76.

¹²⁰ *Ibid.* p. 77.

¹²¹ Fathang is a tax or tribute paid usually to the village chief at the time of harvest. The amount differs from one village to another village.

¹²² C. R. Nag (1999), *op.cit.*, p. 78.

Apart from local political and administrative activities, the Mizo Union also launched some other movements from time to time. The Eastern India Tribal Union (EITU) was formed in October, 1954. Along with EITU, the Mizo Union joined B. P. Chaliha's cabinet in Assam in 1957. A. Thanglura of the Mizo Union was appointed as Chief Parliamentary Secretary in the Assam Ministry. Relation between Congress in Assam and the Mizo Union was quite cordial until 1959 when Mizoram faced severe calamity — a widespread famine, called *Mautam* in Mizo. The Mizo Union pressed the Assam Government for quick relief measures to the famine, but the relief rendered by the government was not sufficient to save the people from starvation and death. The attitude of the Assam Government during the famine period extremely disappointed the Mizo Union leaders.

The relationship between the Assam government and the Mizo Union further deteriorated when the government introduced the Assam Official Language Bill making Assamese as the Official Language of the state in 1960. The Mizo Union withdrew its support from the Assam Congress legislature party. In protest against the Assam Language Bill of 1960, and for the creation of a separate Hill State, the All Party Hill Leaders Conference (APHLC) a composite party comprising of North Eastern tribal political parties was formed in July 1960.¹²³ The Mizo Union extended its support and A. Thanglura, the President of the Mizo Union became the President of APHLC.

By 1962, the Mizo Union had passed the peak of its glory. Again, the party was weakened by internal competition between leaders. As a result, the MNF defeated the Mizo Union in the 1963 elections. The M.U. realized that a better political cause was needed to attract voters. This idea led them to introduce a new policy in 1963; a statehood for Mizoram. Consequently, the M. U. left the APHLC because of the demand of statehood of its own. It passed a resolution to re-affirm its stand on statehood for Mizoram in 1966 and submitted a memorandum to the

¹²³ C. Hermana (1999), *Zoram Politics Thli Tleh Dan (Vol- I)*, p. 151.

Government of India. In 1972, Mizoram was granted the status of a Union Territory which was accepted by the Mizo Union.

With the change of political status, the Mizo Union won the first General Assembly of 1972 by bagging 21 seats out of 30.¹²⁴ Then a dramatic change in the political scenario of the Mizo Union took place. Forays were made from July 1973 for the merger with the Congress despite the fact that apart from being the oldest political party in Mizoram, it enjoyed a clear majority in the House. Hence, the Mizo Union decided to merge with the Congress for not only improving the political and economic future of Mizoram but also to gain favour with the Central Congress government. The Mizo Union ceased its separate political identity on 24th January, 1974, and merged with the Congress Party.¹²⁵

3.1.2 The United Mizo Freedom Organisation (UMFO) 1947- 1958

UMFO was formed in opposition to the stand of the Mizo Union for merging with the Indian Union. It was formed on 5th July, 1947 with Lalmawia as its President. UMFO's main object was the merger of Mizoram with Burma on the eve of India attaining independence.¹²⁶ The reason for this stand was that Burma, enjoying a surplus of rice production, would be able to supply rice to meet the requirement of the Mizos, particularly since Mizoram's production was scarce, and that Burma would help in flourishing trade and commerce between Mizoram and Burma.

This new party was strongly supported by the Mizo chiefs on the ground that it was the only political rival to the Mizo Union, whose political aim was the abolition of the indigenous institution of chieftainship. Therefore, the Mizo chiefs extended full support to the UMFO. After losing Village Council election and District Council election of 1952, the UMFO realized its unpopularity and changed its strategy. It launched a movement for separate hill state in the North- East

¹²⁴ B. Pakem (1999), *Coalition Politics in the North- East India since Independence*, p. 109.

¹²⁵ Lalrimawia, "Indian National Congress (Mizoram Unit) and its Role in Mizoram Politics", *Historical Journal of Mizoram* (July 2004), vol. 5, Issue 1, p. 94.

¹²⁶ C. R. Nag (1999), *op. cit.*, p. 83.

comprising of Manipur, Tripura, and the Autonomous Districts of Assam and North-East Frontier Agency (NEFA). It also placed its demand for a separate hill state in the north east to the State Re-organisation Commission (SRC) in 1954.

But the Commission recommended the continuation of the hill districts of Assam with the existing Autonomous District Councils. This led to the formation of new political party known as Eastern India Tribal Union (EITU) which came into being on 2nd October, 1954 with its headquarter at Shillong under the Chairmanship of Captain W. Sangma.¹²⁷ Its primary aim was to strengthen the position of tribals in the north east. The other objective of the party was to secure a separate hill state comprising of the hill districts of Assam. The UMFO merged with EITU and in consequence, along with two other EITU members of Garo Hills and Khasi Jaintia Hills District, Lalmawia, an EITU member was inducted in the Assam Ministry in 1958.

Although the UMFO could neither show any remarkable achievement nor succeed in attaining majority in the elections it contested, yet its role in Mizo politics cannot be ignored. From India's independence till 1960, there were only two active political parties in Mizoram — the Mizo Union and the UMFO. The UMFO acted as a strong opposition to the Mizo Union which kept the Mizo Union, fully alert and this prevented party dictatorship in politics and administration.

3.1.3 Pawi- Lakher Tribal Union (PLTU)

Formed on October 15th, 1949 by the Lais and the Maras in the southern part of Mizoram with its headquarter at Lawngtlai¹²⁸, with Hengmanga as its first President and Padara as the first General Secretary. The main aim and objectives of the party were- creation of Regional Council for the *Lai* and the *Maras*¹²⁹; integration of both into single administrative unit; to check the growing influence of

¹²⁷ Lalsawia (1994), *Zoram Hming- Hmel*, p. 121.

¹²⁸ L. H. Chhuanawma, Lalthakima, Lal Lawmzuali (2018), *Government and Politics of Mizoram*, p.117.

¹²⁹ Lai (also known as Pawi) and Mara (also known as Lakher) are the two minority ethnic tribes in the southern part of Mizoram, Lai mainly resides in Lawngtlai District and Mara in Saiha district of Mizoram.

the Mizo Union in the southern part of the Mizo Hills, and to safeguard the ethnic identities of the two tribes. The creation of the Pawi- Lakher Regional Council in 1953 could be attributed to the demands put out by the PLTU. The party successfully dominated the Pawi- Lakher Regions and formed the first two Executive Committees of the Pawi Lakher Regional Council in 1954 and 1958.¹³⁰

But the feeling of discontentment among the Maras arose as they felt that the Lais were dominating the Regional Council. Therefore, the Maras started demanding a separate District Council and formed a new party.

3.1.4 Mara Freedom Party (MFP)

With the feeling of discontentment, the Maras left the PLTU and formed their own party known as Mara Freedom Party (MFP) on September 19, 1963 at Zawngling.¹³¹ The aim and objectives of the party were much similar to that of PLTU, with main goal is to secure a separate District Council for Maras and to end the Lai domination of the Pawi- Lakher Regional Council. The MFP used the method of boycotting the elections of the 1965 Regional Council in order to pressurize their political demands, and successfully achieved its aim when the PLRC was trifurcated into three Regional Councils and the Mara Regional Council was upgraded to Autonomous District Council on 29 April, 1972¹³², and the MFP formed the first Executive Committee of the Lakher Regional Council in 1973, but later the party merged with the Indian National Congress in 1974.

3.1.5 The Mizo National Front (MNF)

The Mizo National Front (MNF) which rose in revolt in 1966 traced its origin to the Mizo National Famine Front which was formed in 1960 as a welfare organisation¹³³ for relieving the people who were in great distress due to famine induced by *Mautam* (bamboo flowering). After the famine was over, the organisation

¹³⁰ L. H. Chhuanawma, Lalthakima, Lal Lawmzuali (2018), op.cit., p. 117.

¹³¹ Ibid., p. 118.

¹³² Ibid.p. 118.

¹³³ Ibid. p. 118.

had no purpose in continuing to exist. Therefore, on 22nd October, 1961, the MNFF dropped the word ‘famine’ from its name, became Mizo National Front (MNF) and came up as political party with the objective of creation of a separate and sovereign state of Mizoram.¹³⁴

But the seeds of the independent movement were sown long before the MNF emerged as a political party. On 21 February 1947, a public meeting was held at the Theater Hall in Aizawl to discuss the future status of Mizoram. The meeting was chaired by Sainghinga, Assistant Superintendent and about 200 members consisting of important officials, church leaders and teachers were present in the meeting. After a long debate, the meeting decided to take vote for a resolution by rising of hand. Those who voted for independence were in majority and so the meeting passed the following resolution, “We the Mizos should have self- rule and stand on our own feet”.¹³⁵

The final declaration of the MNF as a regional party in Mizoram took place on 22nd October, 1961 with Laldenga, Lalnunmawia and S. Lianzuala as President, Vice- President and General Secretary respectively. The main objective the MNF was to make Mizoram politically free from the Indian Union and to achieve “Sovereign Independent Greater Mizoram”. By the term “Greater Mizoram”, the MNF meant the Mizo inhabited areas of Manipur, Tripura, Cachar, and Mizo Districts of Assam in India, Arakan and Chin Hills of Burma, and Chittagong Hill Tracts of East Pakistan. This newly formed MNF party’s movement was initially based on non-violent line but soon got tinged with secessionist tendencies.

When MNF came into existence, it drew following from among the members (or ex- members) of the erstwhile UMFO/ EITU and the Mizo Union party. In other words, it attracted all those who had a strong dislike for the Mizo Union. In fact, the Mizo Union stood alone as a party in opposition to the MNF movement. According to Dr. V. V. Rao, “the MNF was able to enlist the tactic sympathy and open support from all types of persons”. The factors for this ‘large scale rebellion’ according to

¹³⁴ K. M. Zakhuma (2001), op. cit., p. 93.

¹³⁵ Ibid., p. 93.

him were: the disbandment of the Mizo dominated 2nd Battalion of the Assam Regiment in 1964, the presence of large number of discontented ex-chiefs and unemployed youths, the readiness of the Pakistan Government to help the MNF, the then Assam Chief Minister Chaliha's patronage of the MNF in order to weaken the Mizo Union, the growing number of juvenile delinquents who gravitated towards the MNF, and the Assamese language issue. He understood the MNF movement as a popular movement rather than being a stray incident of lawlessness perpetrated by a few sections of the people.¹³⁶

The original aims and objectives of the MNF were:

1. Integration of all the Mizo ethnic groups under one government possessing the highest degree of freedom.
2. Upgradation of the status, and the development of the economic conditions, of the Mizo people.
3. Safeguard of the Christian religion.¹³⁷The MNF contested the Assembly by-elections in two of the three Mizo District Constituencies in 1963 and won both by a comfortable majority. In the same year, it captured 145 village councils out of 411 in the elections of Aizawl sub- division. The party at the first place favored non- violence and peace.

The MNF's taking to arms has atleast three versions according to Lalchungnunga. One is that the common membership pressed for it and the leadership had to yield. The second version is that the extremist group in the leadership wanted to start armed- insurrection and Laldenga could not resist the pressure. Thirdly, it is also said that the MNF was out and out for violence but was only buying time to collect more weapons and to find more excuses for the strike.¹³⁸ The MNF declared Mizoram a Sovereign and Independent State with effect from the midnight of February 28- March 1, 1966¹³⁹ and began to attack important

¹³⁶ V. Venkata Rao (1976), *A Century of Tribal Politics in North East India 1874- 1974*, p. 504.

¹³⁷ Lalchungnunga (1994), *op. cit.*, p. 84.

¹³⁸ *Ibid.*, p. 85.

¹³⁹ Zoramthanga (2016), *Mizo Hnam Movement History: A History of Mizo Nationalism Movement*, p. 35.

government installations and security camps at various places. They could capture important places except Aizawl. The MNF and all its subsidiary organizations were declared unlawful under Rule 32 of Defence of India Rules, 1962 and the MNF had to go underground and began its guerilla warfare from across the international borders. The 'go- slow' process and 'wait and see' policy of the government in this critical juncture fueled the plan of the armed revolt by the MNF.

Soon after Mizoram was freed from the MNF control, the Protected and Progressive Villages (PPVs) were constituted in Mizoram in 1966¹⁴⁰ in order to provide security to the people against the activities of the insurgents. Though the Government of India was keen on restoring peace and normalcy in Mizoram and welcoming the underground MNF members to normal life, incidents of unrest, attacks of the MNF and counter attacks of the Indian Army continued to stay for quite a number of years. The MNF leaders Laldenga and others were in constant contact with other nations to get assistance and recognition. Efforts were made by the MNF leaders to explain to the world the rationale of their liberation movement. They approached the United Nations office in Pakistan and handed over a letter addressed to the Secretary General of the UNO. Their contact with the Pakistan authority was, however, a regular feature. The MNF also kept in touch with the rebels of Nagaland, Manipur and Tripura. Inside Mizoram, amid strong security measures, the MNF's frequent serving of "Quit Mizoram Notice" for non- Mizos in public places, regular collection of from the non- Mizos, killing and looting remained in vogue.

In spite of the insurgents' activities committed by Laldenga and his MNF party, the Government of India continued to make all possible efforts to bring back peace and normalcy in Mizoram and stop the underground activities of the MNF. Even the then Prime Minister Indira Gandhi responded to peace talks with the MNF and the first rounds of talks were held in 1976. A "Peace Accord" as signed by Laldenga on behalf of the MNF and S. L. Khurana, Secretary, Ministry of Home

¹⁴⁰ J.V. Hluna, "The Role of the Mizo National Front in Mizoram Politics Upto 1986", *Historical Journal of Mizoram* (July 2004), vol. 5, Issue 1, p. 78.

Affairs on behalf of the Government of India on 1st July, 1976¹⁴¹. But peace remained elusive, and accord only a document. Intermittent talks between the two sides yielded no positive result until the Churches in Mizoram on 31st May, 1982 appealed to the Government of India and the MNF to hasten the end of uncertainties. Following this, Laldenga approached the Government of India for “Cease Fire” in Mizoram on 2nd October, 1984.¹⁴²

After the death of Indira Gandhi in 1984, her successor Rajiv Gandhi gave priority to the problems that his mother had taken up but had left unresolved. At his instance the negotiations between the MNF and the AICC took place on 25th July, 1986 followed by a “Political Accord” signed by Laldenga on behalf of the MNF and R. D. Pradhan, Secretary, Ministry of Home Affairs, Government of India and Lalkhama, Chief Secretary, Government of Mizoram on behalf of the Government of India.¹⁴³

By this “Political Accord” of 1986 the MNF, coming down from its earlier stand of attaining “Sovereign Independent Mizoram”, accepted Statehood for Mizoram granted by the Government of India. It is relevant to point out the fact that by the time the peace accord was signed, the Congress government was both at the center and in the Union Territory. The Congress- I decided to vacate the seat of Chief Minister- ship of Mizoram for the MNF leader Laldenga for the interim period until the first assembly election in the full- fledged State of Mizoram.

Upholding the Peace Accord of 1986 between the Government of India and the MNF, the Parliament passed the Constitution 53rd Amendment Bill and the State of Mizoram Bill (1986) on 5th August, 1986¹⁴⁴ which upgraded the status of the existing Union Territory of Mizoram into a full- fledged State of the Indian Union. The result was that Mizoram became the 23rd State of the Indian Union with 40-member single chamber Legislative Assembly, three Districts, nine Sub- Divisions

¹⁴¹ Ibid. p. 85.

¹⁴² Ibid. p. 87.

¹⁴³ R. Zamawia (2007) *Zofate Zinkawngah (Zalenna Mei a Mit Tur a Ni Lo)*, p. 931.

¹⁴⁴ J. V Hluna, op.cit., p. 88.

and three Autonomous Hill District Council on 20th February, 1987. Also, according to the provisions of Memorandum of Settlement, the MNF Party's constitution was amended and re- organized accordingly.

The MNF Party, after signing the Peace Accord formed the interim government, with the Congress party as agreed between the two parties prior to the signing of the Accord. The MNF President Laldenga as the Chief Minister and the ruling Congress CM Lal Thanhawla, who stepped down from the post became the deputy Chief minister. The MNF won the first State Legislative Assembly Elections of 1987, the fourth State Legislative Assembly Elections of 1998, the fifth State Legislative Assembly Elections of 2003, and the eight State Legislative Assembly Elections of 2018.

3.1.6 The Indian National Congress

The Indian National Congress party was first established in Mizoram by A. Thanglura on 11th April, 1961.¹⁴⁵ The party was headed by A. Thanglura as president, Lalsawia as vice president, Lalthankima as general secretary and Hrangchhuana as treasurer. This body was formed as the first adhoc committee of the party. In the following year in 1962, a conference of the congress workers held in Aizawl formally constituted the Mizo District Congress Committee (MDCC) and proceeded to elect its office bearers consisting of the president, A. Thanglura, the vice president, Lalthangliana, the treasurer, Hrangchhuana and the general secretary Zalawma.¹⁴⁶

Initially, the Mizo people, at large, regarded the party as an organisation of *Vais* (outsiders) which would hamper the existence of Mizo custom and culture. Due to this and several other reasons, the Unit of the Indian National Congress could not make much headway. A. Thanglura, the President of the District Committee was stationed in Shillong, and thus the organisation lacked leadership and systematic hierarchical organisation at home. The majority of the hill people did not appreciate

¹⁴⁵ R. Vanlawma (1972), op. cit., p. 251.

¹⁴⁶ A. Thanglura (1982), *Zoram Politic Lumleh Dan*, p. 180.

the party dominated by outsiders and regarded it as an instrument of exploitation. Furthermore, regional feelings had taken deep roots in the party politics especially in Mizo politics. The regional tendencies of the Mizo coupled with the popularity of the Mizo Union and the MNF did not allow the Indian National Congress to hold a strong footing in Mizoram. Lastly, the language policy of the Congress Government in Assam in 1960 also had adverse impact on the fortunes of the party in Mizoram. As a result, the Congress party suffered setback, and fared badly in the Assembly Election of 1962 and the 1963 Bye- election.¹⁴⁷

From the beginning, the congress party was weakened by infighting between two factions, one led by R. Dengthuama and the other by Hrangchhuana, favored by party president A. Thanglura. This faction grew stronger over time and continued to destroy the effectiveness of the party organization for quite some time. The year following the outbreak of insurgency, elections to the General Assembly was held in 1967. None dared to file nominations from the Congress party except the President who contested from 2 constituencies, Aizawl West and Aizawl East. He was elected uncontested and though this was an ignoble action in the side of the people, it marked an important turning point in the political history of the Congress party. Since then, it gained in popularity. Thus, the Indian National Congress emerged as a strong party in 1967 out of the troubled situation created by the MNF insurgency.¹⁴⁸

The development of party politics in Mizoram since 1966 onwards went in favour of the Congress Party in the District. The Congress openly advocated 'Political Settlement' with the MNF, and this helped them to win the District Council election of 1970. Since then the Congress came to control the Mizo Hill District Council but factionalism within the party became more and more prominent. In the course of a year, the Executive Council was toppled twice. The group led by Dengthuama joined the Mizo Union and the rest remained aligned to A. Thanglura.

¹⁴⁷ R. N. Prasad (1987), *Government & Politics in Mizoram*, p. 263.

¹⁴⁸ K. M. Zakhuma (2001), *op. cit.*, p. 85.

In the wake of the MNF insurgency, the Pastaskar Commission had floated the idea of the Constitution of the Mizo Hill District into a Union Territory, and the Government of India accepted the proposal in July, 1971. The Mizoram Congress was unhappy with the idea but the District Council welcomed it. The Congress workers of the District met Indira Gandhi in September, 1971 and asserted that they may even prefer the Status quo but this was not accepted by the Centre.¹⁴⁹

Apart from its national programmes, the Congress in Mizoram laid emphasis on the establishment of peace and was concerned with peaceful settlement of the Mizo political problem as well as with the rapid economic development of Mizoram. The party talked of statehood, the integration of the contiguous areas inhabited by the Mizos with the present Mizoram and industrialization of the state. In spite of all these programmes, the Congress continued to suffer serious setbacks due to split and disunity. Since its very inception, the Congress party in Mizoram had been personality-oriented party with complete non-attachment principles and divorced from ideological conditions.¹⁵⁰

3.1.6.1 Merger of Mizo Union with the Congress

In 1973, a significant trend emerged in Mizo politics when the ruling Mizo Union and the Congress decided to merge unconditionally. While the Congress wanted active involvement in the administration of the territory, the Mizo Union longed to join national mainstream to receive patronage from the Centre by merging with the ruling Indian National Congress. The merger took place on 24th January, 1974 and was approved by the Congress High Command¹⁵¹. Accordingly, the Congress came into power in the territory with the merger of the Mizo Union within its fold and completed its five-year tenure till May 1977. But they failed to win the 1978 and 1979 General Elections but managed to come back to power in the 1984 General Election of the Territory with Lal Thanhawla, the President of the party as the Chief Minister.

¹⁴⁹ Lalrimawia, "Indian National Congress (Mizoram Unit) and its Role in Mizoram Politics", *Historical Journal of Mizoram* (July 2004), vol. 5, Issue 1, p. 34.

¹⁵⁰ R. N. Prasad (1987), *op. cit.*, p. 294.

¹⁵¹ Lalrimawia (July 2004), *op. cit.* 36.

The Congress took quite a long time to establish itself as a dominant party in Mizoram. As mentioned earlier, the lack of unity and dynamic leadership were the main weakness of the party. This hampered the growth of the party in Mizoram. When the Mizo Union merged with the Congress and became the party in power in 1974, things began to turn in the Congress party's favor. The entire rural economy of Mizoram collapsed under the guerilla warfare and people were destitute. From the beginning, the party recommended a permanent solution to the political problems of Mizoram and preferred peace negotiations between the Center and the MNF. The signing of the 'peace accord' and the stepping down from the ruling ministry by the Congress party left important impact in the political development of Mizoram.¹⁵²

In the post peace accord politics of 1986, the Congress under the leadership of Lal Thanhawla won the second State Legislative Assembly Elections of 1989, the third State Legislative Assembly Elections of 1993, the sixth State Legislative Assembly Elections of 2008, the seventh State Legislative Assembly Elections of 2013 with Lal Thanhawla as its chief ministers during these tenures.

3.1.7 People's Conference (PC) Party

The birth of the People's Conference Party can be traced to the establishment of the 'Human Rights Committee' on 22nd June, 1974, which was formed to protect the rights and dignity of the Mizos. It was headed by Brig T. Sailo, the founder President of the party.¹⁵³ The Human Rights Committee, since its inception, set about opposing the army atrocities. In a short period of time, the Committee secured larger support from all the sections of the society. The chairman Brig. T. Sailo toured the country side, explaining what the army can and cannot do under the law and also explained to the public their right under the law. Wherever he went, he also met the security forces and urged them not to act in excess of the law which could defame the reputation of the army. The public also became more enlightened and greatly appreciated what the Human Rights Committee was doing.

¹⁵² Ibid., p. 37.

¹⁵³ Kenneth Chawngliana (2002), *Mizoram Hruaitute Sulhnu*, p. 5.

After assessing the atrocities committed by the Army which poured in from various quarters of the Union Territory, a Memorandum was sent to the Prime Minister of India on 16th October, 1974, copies of which were sent to leading newspapers across the country. This had the desired effect and within a year the officers of the Army at various levels displayed a change of attitude.

The leaders of the Human Rights Committee felt the need of a change in the prevailing political situation in Mizoram. They also realized the necessity of an organizational overhaul to make the Committee more efficient. The leaders of the Committee had a meeting at the residence of Vanlalhraia, Chaltlang in Aizawl to chalk out the approach towards forming a new political party and resolved to convene a People's Conference at Theatre Hall in Aizawl.¹⁵⁴ Therefore, a meeting was called on 15th to 17th April, 1975 for which invitations were sent to all the Village Councils throughout Mizoram.

The response was good and the Conference was well attended, with representatives from 192 villages and a total of 822 delegates attended the Conference. After a two-day discussion, the conference unanimously accepted Chuanvawra Tlau's proposal and passed the decision to found a new political party on the 17th April, 1975 under the chairmanship of Lalsawia, Ex- CEM. Thus, was born a new party, albeit one without a name. However, in a matter of days, delegate started referring to the new party as "People's Conference" (PC) Party.¹⁵⁵ Thus, the new political party was spontaneously and by unwritten consent called the People's Conference Party. An adhoc Committee of office bearers was formed and the following persons were selected:

President- Brig. T. Sailo

Vice President- Rev. Sakhawliana M. A., B. D.

Consultants- Dr. Rothuama, MBBS

¹⁵⁴ Ngurthankima Sailo "Emergence of People's Conference Party in Mizoram and its Role in the Development of Mizoram", *Historical Journal of Mizoram* (July 2004), Vol. 5, Issue 1, p. 94.

¹⁵⁵ Kenneth Chawngliana (2002), *op. cit.*, p. 14.

J. Kapthianga
Thangridema
Treasurer- Zalianchhunga.
General Secretary- Zairemthanga.

The PC Party adopted a '*Cockerel*' as the symbol of the party and a *Scale* as the Party Election Symbol. It also adopted '*Green*' as the colour of the Party Flag.

3.1.7.1 Aims and Objectives of the People's Conference Party

1. The party will endeavour to prepare grounds for peaceful solution of the Mizo political problem.
2. The Party aims at the unification of all Mizo inhabited contiguous areas now forming parts of India, under a single administrative unit.
3. The Party stands for the wishes of the people to preserve their distinct identity Ethnically, Culturally and Socially.
4. The interest of the people and Mizoram shall be the guiding principles with overriding priority and precedence over those of the Party.
5. The Party will vow for speedy economic advancement with special emphasizes on rural development.
6. The Party will uphold the aims and objectives of the Human Rights Committee, Mizoram.¹⁵⁶

Furthermore, the Party also selected the following political principles for its foundations:

- Non- Violence, Justice and Truth.
- Vindication of Fundamental Rights of the Mizo people as guaranteed in the Constitution of India.
- Solution of any political problems through Constitutional means within India by negotiation.

¹⁵⁶ Ibid., p. 15.

- Creation of atmosphere of goodwill, mutual understanding and cooperation between Law and Order enforcement agencies and the general public.

The new Party taught the people on the basis of the following issue:

1. The Human Rights of the people.
2. Assimilation: Firstly to prevent commercial exploitation of the Mizo by traders from outside and preventing from the uncontrolled influx of Non-Mizos into Mizoram. Secondly, to put a stop to the increasing influx of the Chakmas into Mizoram (who are neither Mizo, nor Indian) and their uncontrolled entry into Mizoram, this posed a danger of assimilation to the Mizos.
3. Boundary Issue: To reconstruct the correct boundary of Mizoram as was agreed upon by the British Expedition Force and the Mizo Chief, Suakpuilala in a signed document of 1875, and not as given in the North East Area Reorganization Act, 1971.
4. Economic Self- Sufficiency.
5. Ethnic Identity.

The UT elections of Mizoram Assembly was held in May, 1978. In this election, the PC Party won 22 seats out of 30 seats and formed its first ministry headed by Brig. T. Sailo as Chief Minister.¹⁵⁷ The Chief Minister stressed that all future development plan for Mizoram should be 'Basic Needs' oriented which are Food, Water Supply, Power, Communication, Transport System and Rural Development commonly known as 'the Six Basic Needs'.¹⁵⁸ The party took the question of 'assimilation' very seriously. It also took some measures for repatriation of illegal infiltrators and for preventing further infiltration of foreigners into Mizoram. the party also took up the question of Mizoram- Cachar boundary and Inner Line Reserves and appointed study group towards this.¹⁵⁹

¹⁵⁷ Lalchungnunga (1994), op. cit., p. 92.

¹⁵⁸ Ibid., p. 93

¹⁵⁹ Ibid., p. 94.

While peace settlement between the Government of India and the underground MNF was still pending, the PC Ministry demanded special status for Mizoram with constitutional safeguards to Mizos and Mizoram in terms of ownership and transfer of lands, socio- cultural protection and economic provisions. The issue of ethnic identity and the dangers of assimilation by the population of the neighboring states and countries, raised by the party workers had won the support of the people at large.

There arose disunity within the party resulted in the splitting of the PC party into two in 1978 that led to the fall of the PC Party ministry on 11th November, 1978 and President's Rule was imposed for a while and orders for fresh election were issued¹⁶⁰. Election took place in April 1979 and the Party could win 18 seats out of 30. The second ministry lasted its full term of five years. Despite the various efforts put forth by the Ministry, due to the time constraints and unhealthy politics prevailing in Mizoram, they could not complete those projects and programmes during their short tenure of about five and half years.

Ever since they were voted out of power in 1984, they have not been able to stage a comeback on their own. The PC party had pre- poll alliance with the Congress in the third State Legislative Assembly Elections of 1993 and formed the government, unfortunately the alliance did not could not survive for a long term, that led to the PC Party leaving the Congress led government. Again, in the fourth State Legislative Assembly Elections of 1998, the PC Party fought the elections with the alliance of the MNF, formed the government but the coalition could not last long.

3.1.8 Zoram Nationalist Party (ZNP)

Zoram Nationalist party has been formed due to the splits within the MNF party because of leadership issue on 20th March, 1997¹⁶¹ as there was a fight within the party for presidential post between the then president Pu Zoramthanga and Pu Lalduhawma, and the latter became the president of the newly founded Mizo

¹⁶⁰ Ngurthankima Sailo, op. cit., p. 98.

¹⁶¹ L. H. Chhuanawma, Lalthakima, Lal Lawmzuali (2018), op.cit., p. 143.

National Front (Nationalist) later on changed its name to Zoram Nationalist Party in 2000. The founding leaders of the party were-

President – Lalduhawma

Vice President- Lalbiakdiki (w/o Laldenga (L)

Treasurer- Lianhmingthanga

General Secretaries- Andrew Lalherliana, Lalnghenga.¹⁶²

Many veteran leaders of the MNF party including the wife of Laldenga joined this party. The party claimed to be the true and origin of MNF. After many unsuccessful attempts to win the elections, the party changed its name to Zoram Nationalist Party. But, a mere change in the name did not have much impact in the electoral politics, the party could secure only two seats each in the 2003 and 2008 Assembly elections, did not win any seat in the 2018 Assembly elections, and fought the 2018 elections under the umbrella of Zoram People's Movement (ZPM).

3.1.9 Bharatiya Janata Party (BJP)

The right- wing party the BJP was established in Mizoram on 3rd February, 1993. The first office bearers were Vanlalrawna as President, Chawngzika Rieng & K. Lalhnuna as Vice- Presidents, C. Thanngura as General Secretary, Rualpawla as Secretary, and Vanlalrawna both as a Treasurer as well as President. Mizoram which is a pre-dominantly Christian state, the BJP finds it difficult to build up its root where the Church has a decisive role in the state politics, especially during the election times. Even though the party started contesting in the state legislative Assembly elections since 1993, it failed to registered its win till 2018 state legislative assembly elections. Though the party has minimal support base in the state, it has marked its entry by winning one seat in 2018 state legislative assembly elections. On realizing the ground reality, the BJP is gaining popularity among the minority ethnic clans. The lone BJP MLA belongs to Chakma community from the southern Mizoram. By

¹⁶² Ibid., p. 143

witnessing the recent political developments in the state especially in the Autonomous District Councils (ADC) areas, in the Chakma Autonomous District (CAD) , the BJP registered its strong presence after the Congress in February, 2015. Of the 81 village councils, its secured for the first time 5 seats which was otherwise a strong hold of the Congress.¹⁶³

3.1.10 Zoram People's Movement Party (ZPM)

This was originally an alliance group to give a third front alternative to the two dominating parties the Congress and the MNF ahead of the 2018 state legislative assembly elections. On September 1, 2017, an alliance for the upcoming state legislative assembly election called as Zoram People's Movement (ZPM) was initiated by the MPC, ZNP, Zoram Exodus Movement (ZEM), Zoram Decentralization Front (ZDF) and Zoram Reformation Front.¹⁶⁴ The member organizations did not have full confidence until the end of September 2018 when it tried for registration as a new political party with the Election Commission of India¹⁶⁵ but failed due to lack of time. Therefore, each candidate of the ZPM filed their nominations as independent candidate, but with common symbol, i.e Hat. The alliance won 8 seats out of 40 assembly constituencies, (contesting in 37 constituencies), which was more than the incumbent ruling Party, the Congress. Many candidates were new entrants in politics.

But in 2020, the leader of the ZPM legislature party and the President of ZNP Lalduhawma was disqualified as per the Tenth Schedule of the Constitution under the Anti- Defection Law, but later won the bye- election in 2021 from the same constituency. In 2021, ZPM decided to form itself not merely as an alliance, but as a political party. Therefore, it called for merger of all the alliance organizations to merge and function it as a normal political party. But some especially (minority in number) leaders of the ZNP and MPC decided not to dissolve their previous parties.

¹⁶³ V. Bijukimar (2019), *Parties & Electoral Politics in Northeast India: Contention of Ethno-regionalism and Hindu Nationalism*, p. 95.

¹⁶⁴ Vanlalremruata Tonson (2021), "Alternative Fronts in Mizoram Elections", in Lalmalsawma Khiangte and F. Lalramhluni (eds.) *Electoral Politics in Mizoram: Emerging issues and Trends*, p. 29.

¹⁶⁵ Ibid, p. 32.

ZPM is now a registered and recognized political party in Mizoram which puts a challenge in the battle front in the elections between the Congress- MNF, thus providing the third alternatives among the voters.

3.2 Political Parties in Nagaland

Nagaland is a hill state in the extreme northeast of India, with Kohima as its capital. It is bordered by Myanmar in the east, Assam in the west, Arunachal Pradesh in the north and Manipur in the south. It covers an area of 16975 sq kms. It is a state of 16 recognized tribes in India and major tribes are Angami, Sumi, Ao, Lotha, Chakesang, Chang, Konyak, Khianniugan, Kuki, Kachari, Phom, Pochuri, Rengma, Sangtam, Yimchungru and Ziliang. Nagaland emerged as a state out of the Naga Hills District of Assam and NEFA province in 1963. There are 16 districts in the state and the State Legislative Assembly consists of 60 members.

Regarding the fighting for political space in the context of Nagaland, the demand for self- governance was made early as 1929, when the first political organization called Naga Club submitted a memorandum to Simon Commission while visiting Kohima demanding that Nagas should be 'left alone' when the British decide to leave India.¹⁶⁶ Then the Naga National Council (NNC) was formed in March 1945 to represent the aspirations of the Nagas. Its representatives met the Cabinet Mission in April 1946 and asserted that they would not accept any kind of constitutional arrangement within the Indian Constitution. A nine- point agreement was arrived at, which recognized the distinctiveness of the Naga nation, and gave the latter the option of deciding within ten years to either join the Union of India or get independent.

¹⁶⁶ Sajal Nag (2000), "Construction of Nationhood: Ethnic Minorities secessionism and Legitimization in North East India" in Girin Phukon (ed.), *Political Dynamics of North East India*, p. 30.

Then the NNC launched a plebiscite in 1951 and 99% voted for the separate homeland. The following year the Nagas boycotted the first Indian Parliamentary election and continued for freedom struggle and declared the formation of 'Naga Federal Republic' as a sovereign state on 22nd March 1956, under the leadership of the Naga National Council. The NNC contested for a separate homeland for the Nagas from Naga inhabited areas in Assam and Myanmar. As a resolution passed in the second Naga People's Convention in May 1958, a drafted Sixteen Point Proposal was formed and was submitted to the then Prime Minister of India on June 1960.¹⁶⁷

Following the Sixteen Point Proposal with certain modifications, the Indian government created the State of Nagaland on 24th January 1961 after passing the Nagaland (Transitional Provisions) Regulation of 1962 and created a full-fledged Nagaland State on 1st December 1963. But this was not acceptable to some political organizations and insurgent activities continued in Nagaland led by NSCN (IM) and the factional group NSCN (K).

3.2.1 The Naga National Council (NNC):

The party was formed in 1946 by Charles Pawesy, the Deputy Commissioner of the Naga Hills District.¹⁶⁸ There was no political party in Nagaland other than the Naga National Council till 1956. In the beginning, this party was dominated by the nationalists and the moderate Nagas but the extremists led by Phizo captured the Naga National Council in 1950. Phizo replaced Visar Angami as the President of the Naga National Council. It was at the behest of Phizo that the NNC boycotted the first election held to constitute the District Council and the general election of 1952. As a result, the Naga Hills district remained unrepresented in both the Assembly and the Union Parliament until the second general election was held in 1957.

¹⁶⁷ Kuohei K. Zhimomi (2004), *Politics and Militancy in Nagaland*, pp. 74-75.

¹⁶⁸ V. Hotuko Jimomi (2009), *Political Parties in Nagaland*, p. 5.

There was a split inside the party just before the second general election of 1957. Some of the moderate and nationalist Nagas under the leadership of Imkongliba Ao dissociated themselves from the extremist group led by Phizo and formed a Reforming Committee of Naga National Council whose chairman was T. N. Angami. The aim of T. N. Angami group was to denounce violent activities, help to restore peace and order, and to participate in the constitutional system of India. It was therefore, decided not to boycott the second general assembly election which was to be held in February, 1957. The Naga hills district had to send three representatives to the Assam Legislative Assembly. The Reforming Committee sent three candidates for three seats. Since the Phizoists again boycotted the second general election and no independent candidates filed his nomination, the three candidates were declared elected uncontested.

3.2.2 Naga Nationalist Organization (NNO)

The nationalist and moderate Nagas, who had disassociated earlier with the Phizo group, had been working along with the Church leaders for a negotiated settlement of the Naga problem. They, therefore, organized the first Naga People's Convention in August, 1957 to discuss the issue in detail and to enlist the people's support in their endeavor to find a peaceful political settlement of the Naga problem. During this Convention, the moderates formed a new political party came to be known as the Naga Nationalist Organization (NNO).¹⁶⁹

This was the second political party in the Naga Hills, the NNO expressed its faith in democratic values and a constitutional government. The new political party also favoured a peaceful solution of the Naga problem 'within the framework of the Indian Union'. The Naga representatives in the Assam Legislative Assembly however could not continue for a long time as in October 1957, an agreement was concluded between the Government and the representatives of the Naga National Organization whereby the Naga hills became an independent administrative unit,

¹⁶⁹ Ibid., p. 80

separate from Assam. This new administrative unit which came to be known as “the Naga Hills Tuensang Area” was placed under the direct control of the Ministry of External Affairs. Consequently, all the three Naga representatives of the Assam Legislative Assembly resigned on 1st December, 1957, the day the Naga Hills Tuensang Area became a separate unit from Assam. A Naga member of the Lok Sabha, however continued to represent the Naga Hills Area according to Clause 6 of the Naga Hills Tuensang Area Act, 1957.

After 1957, after the NNC under the influence of Phizo pressed its demand for independent and sovereign Nagaland, the leaders of the Naga National Organization agreed to seek a solution of the Naga problem within the framework of the Indian Constitution. The leaders of the party organized two Naga People’s Convention where they drafted a sixteen-point memorandum which became the basis for negotiations between the leaders of the NNO and the Government of India. In the sixteen-point memorandum, the nationalist and moderate Nagas had demanded statehood for the Naga Hills and Tuensang Area within the Indian Union. Prior to the formation of a new state of Nagaland, they had asked for an Interim Body which would prepare the grounds for the formation of a new Government of Nagaland.

These demands were conceded by the Government of India in July 1960. Article 15 of the memorandum had demanded that there shall be an Interim Body with elected representatives from each tribe to assist and advise the Governor in administration of Nagaland during the transitional period (a period between the signing of the agreement and the creation of Nagaland state)¹⁷⁰. To give effect to this demand, the Government formed the Nagaland Transitional Regulation for the administration and for matters connected therewith until the creation of Nagaland as a State under the Indian Union. This transitional Regulation was promulgated by the President of India on 24th January, 1961.

¹⁷⁰ Ibid. p. 84.

The Naga Nationalist Organization won the first State Legislative Assembly Election in January, 1957 by securing 4 seats. The leader of the party Shilu Ao was invited to form the ministry¹⁷¹. It initiated many welfare measures for the development and progress of the Naga people. It also tried to impress upon the underground Nagas to give up hostile activities and join hands with the Government for peace. The Government under Shilu Ao had a hand in the formation of a 'Peace Mission' which negotiated the cease- fire agreement with the underground Nagas¹⁷² and hostilities ceased for some years. Moreover, with the initiative of the Chief Minister, the Legislative Assembly passed a resolution adopting English as the official language of the State for administration and educational purposes.

The second general election in Nagaland was held from 6th to 10th February, 1969. This time, the total strength of the Nagaland State Legislative Assembly was increased from forty-six to fifty-two because seats allocated to the Tuensang District had increased from six to twelve. The NNO became the single largest party gaining twenty-two seats when result was declared. The NNO elected Hokishe Sema as its leader on 19th February, 1969. The Ministry not only worked for economic development of the State, but it also tried to win over the underground Nagas. The Chief Minister himself gave the assurance to the underground Nagas that they would be properly rehabilitated if they gave up insurgent movements.

In October 1971, a serious political crisis arose in the ruling Naga Nationalist Organization when a group of legislators led by T. N. Angami had pressed for associating the NNC in the peace talks with the Government. Hokishe Sema was, however, of the view that the NNC did not represent all the underground Nagas. He believed that all the underground groups should be associated in the negotiations. If negotiations were to be conducted with only one section of the rebels, the others would continue to pose the problem. This difference of opinion reached such point that the Chief Minister asked three of his ministers, T. N. Angami, Akum Imlong, T.

¹⁷¹ V. Hotuko Jimomi (2009), *op.cit.*, p. 9.

¹⁷² Dr. Chandrika Singh (1981), *Political Evolution of Nagaland*, p. 132.

Sangutham and the Deputy Speaker to resign¹⁷³. These persons left the NNO and later joined the United Front of Nagaland.

Due to political instability in 1975, President's Rule was imposed in Nagaland. During this period, the historic Shillong Accord was concluded between the Governor of Nagaland and the underground Naga leaders which brought the underground Naga hostilities to an end. Another notable event during the President's Rule in Nagaland was the merger of the Naga Nationalist Organization with the Indian National Congress. In fact, from the very beginning, the leaders of the NNO had taken their inspiration and guidance from the Congress Party. Even before the imposition of President's Rule in Nagaland, the leaders of the NNO had demanded the merger of the party with the Indian National Congress at the tenth General Session of the Party held in February, 1975 at Tuensang.¹⁷⁴ The final decision was taken in the eleventh Session of the Party which was held at Kohima in the first week of May, 1976.

3.2.3 Democratic Party

Democratic Party, a regional political party was formed just before the 1st General Election to the Naga Legislative Assembly of 1964¹⁷⁵, the Nagas who successfully boycotted the 1st and 2nd General Elections of India didn't have any other choice, except to form a political party after the inaugural of the State of Nagaland on 1st December, 1963 by S. Radhakrishnan, the President of India.¹⁷⁶ The party was formed on 21st October, 1963 at the residence of Mr. Kevichusa with its objective to bring the Naga Underground and the Government of India to a negotiating table using Cock as its election symbol registered itself with the Election Commission of India. One of its standpoint was to dissolved the party immediately after normalcy was restored in Nagaland. On 6th September, 1964 when first round of talks were announced between the two conflicting parties under the efforts of the

¹⁷³ Ibid., p. 133

¹⁷⁴ Kuhoi K. Zhimomi (2004), op.cit., p. 125.

¹⁷⁵ V. Hotuko Jimomi (2009), op.cit, p. 11.

¹⁷⁶ Ibid.,11

Naga Peace Mission, 12 members of the Democratic Party members of the Legislative Assembly resigned, the party followed up the dissolution of the Party.¹⁷⁷

3.2.4 United Front of Nagaland (UFN):

When ceasefire agreement was signed on 6th September, 1964 between the Government of India and Federal Government of Nagaland, the DP was dissolved immediately. However, the process of political stability and development was still continuing, urging the members of the dissolved DP to form a new political organization on 18th July, 1968 known as the United Front of Nagaland (UNF)¹⁷⁸, Mr. A. Kevichusa was the founder of the party with its sole objective to bring permanent peace through peaceful negotiation in Nagaland. The objectives of the newly- formed party, which came to be known as United Front of Nagaland, were declared to be:

1. To work for unity among the Nagas on the principle of justice and equality.
2. To take steps to bring about a political settlement through peaceful means.

3.2.5 Naga People's Front (NPF):

NPF is a regional political party founded in 2002, active in Nagaland and Naga inhabited areas of Manipur and Arunachal Pradesh which claims it has its root in the formation of the Democratic Party of Nagaland in 1963, stating that the party has undergone change of nomenclature from DPN to UFN to UDF to NNDP to NPC to NPF¹⁷⁹, change of the name of the party to suit the demanding situation of different periods as claimed by the present President of the party Dr. Shurhozeli¹⁸⁰, claiming that the NPF is the oldest regional political party not only in Nagaland, but

¹⁷⁷ Ibid., p. 12.

¹⁷⁸ Ibid., p. 23

¹⁷⁹ Shurhozeli Liezietsu (2016), *Lest We Forget*, p. 34.

¹⁸⁰ Personal Interview of Dr. Shurhozeli Liezietsu, President, NPF at his residence in Kohima, Nagaland on 5th December, 2021.

in the whole NE state with Cock as the party symbol. Presently, the NPF is a part of the coalition government of United Democratic Alliance with NDPP and BJP, having 25 MLAs in the state Legislative Assembly. In the 2013 state legislative assembly elections, the NPF led Democratic Alliance of Nagaland (DAN) government in the state was formed. In the 2014 general election, the NPF leader and the then Chief Minister Neiphiu Rio won the lone Lok Sabha seat with the support of the BJP hoping his 'greater role' in national politics.¹⁸¹ The NPF became the single largest party to win the Assembly Elections of 2018 by securing 26 seats out of 60 and became a part of the NDPP led government in Nagaland.

3.2.6 The Indian National Congress:

Due to political instability in 1975, President's Rule was imposed in Nagaland. During this period, the historic Shillong Accord was concluded between the Governor of Nagaland and the underground Naga leaders which brought the underground Naga hostilities to an end. Another notable event during the President's Rule in Nagaland was the merger of the Naga Nationalist Organization with the Indian National Congress¹⁸². In fact, from the very beginning, the leaders of the NNO had taken their inspiration and guidance from the Congress Party. Even before the imposition of President's Rule in Nagaland, the leaders of the NNO had demanded the merger of the party with the Indian National Congress at the tenth General Session of the Party held in February, 1975 at Tuensang.¹⁸³ The final decision was taken in the eleventh Session of the Party which was held at Kohima in the first week of May, 1976.

After the merger, Hokishe Sema, who became the President of the Nagaland Pradesh Congress Committee told the editor of *Nagaland Times* on 21st May, 1976, that "the formal merger of the Naga Nationalist Organization with the Indian National Congress signified the fulfillment of the ardent desire and aspiration of the people of Nagaland because the days of isolation are over and the entire Naga people

¹⁸¹ V. Bijukimar (2019), op.cit., p. 85.

¹⁸² V. Hotuko Jimomi (2009), op.cit, p. 35.

¹⁸³ Ibid., p. 35.

are conscious of it. No wonder everyone in Nagaland is happy at the merger and the news has been received here by one and all with unreserved mirth and jubilation". After the merger, several prominent leaders of the United Democratic Front, including T. N. Angami joined the Congress.

Essentially speaking, the Naga Nationalist Organization had merged with the Congress in hope of capturing political power whenever the election would be held. These expectations, however, were soon dashed to the ground when India's sixth general election was held in the third week of March 1977. The Congress Party got defeated in most of the States of India including Nagaland. The Congress nominee for the only Nagaland seat in the Lok Sabha was also defeated by the United Democratic Front's candidate. The poll verdict in the Parliamentary election of Nagaland was in a sense a victory for democracy. People all over the country were dissatisfied with the dictatorial rule of Indira Gandhi. The Naga people had also a bitter taste of the President's Rule and the Emergency, and so they did not vote for the Congress nominee.

The elections to the Legislative Assembly of 1977 saw the Congress contesting 37 seats winning 15 seats from 20.44% of the votes polled mostly from the Sema and mix tribes inhabited areas.¹⁸⁴ In its election manifesto, the Naga Pradesh Congress Committee issued a nine- point manifesto. The party reiterated to stand for democracy, socialism and secularism. It assured the underground Nagas that the Party would assist in formulating other issues relating to the Third Clause of the Shillong Accord. For betterment of the people, the Party assured better educational facilities, basic awareness of rural development, lower prices, and a solution of the dearness allowance issue of the Government employee. New plans for development of village communities, rural industries, rural water supply, agriculture, veterinary and animal husbandry etc would be adopted.

¹⁸⁴ Ibid., p. 157.

3.2.7 Nationalist Democratic Progressive Party (NDPP):

NDPP was formed by the rebels from Naga People's Front (NPF) who supported its leader Neiphiu Rio with the name of Democratic Progressive Party, which later in October 2017, changed its name to Nationalist Democratic Progressive Party (NDPP)¹⁸⁵ with Chingwang Konyak as its President. The party formation was mainly on the line that the NPF broke its ties with BJP for the 2018 Nagaland State Legislative Assembly Elections. The NDPP then formed the alliance with the BJP and won 18 seats with 25.20% vote shared and formed the coalition government with the BJP¹⁸⁶. This is a recognized state party using globe as its election symbol.

3.2.8 Bharatiya Janata Party (BJP)

The Bharatiya Janata Party took its inception in Nagaland on the 3rd of January, 1987¹⁸⁷, P. Pusa Lotha was appointed as the first Convenor of the party in the state. The BJP first started contesting the State Legislative Assembly elections in 1987 by putting two candidates in two constituencies.

In the largely Christian populated state of Nagaland, the BJP constructs a counter narrative to Christianity to strengthen its base. The BJP's attempt to glorify the Naga's traditional spiritual leader (who opposed conversion into Christianity) and freedom fighter Rani Gaidinlui by constructing a memorial-cum- library in Kohima can be seen in this direction.¹⁸⁸ The victory of the BJP party in the 2014 general elections gave further boost to the part in expanding its mass based beyond its traditional stronghold of mainland north India hindi speaking belt. In 2013 state assembly elections, the then ruling party NPF was an alliance partner in the NDA at

¹⁸⁵ <http://www.uniindia.net/nagaland-s-2nd-regional-political-party-named-as-democratic-progressive-party-launches/other/news/874581.html>, Retrieved on 31.08.2000.

¹⁸⁶ Dipankar Ghose (March 9, 2018), "Nagaland: Neiphiu Rio takes the CM Oath, cabinet moves to rename Indira stadium", <https://indianexpress.com/article/north-east-india/nagaland/nagaland-neiphiu-rio-takes-cm-oath-cabinet-moves-to-rename-indira-stadium-5091437/> Retrieved on 31st August, 2020.

¹⁸⁷ V. Hotuko Jimomi (2009), op.cit., p. 279.

¹⁸⁸ V. Bijukimar (2019), op.cit., p. 86.

the centre and the BJP was an ally of the NPF led Democratic Alliance of Nagaland (DAN) in the state.

The BJP has secured 12 seats in the 2018 State Assembly elections), having six cabinet ministers and extended its support to Nationalist Democratic Progressive Party (NDPP), cutting off its long-term ally with the NPF (15 years tie) which emerged as the single largest party in 60- members assembly. The BJP's ascendancy in the largely Christian dominated state significant development inspite of the warning by the Nagaland Baptist Church (NBCC) the largest denomination in the state. During the election campaigns of the 2018, the NBCC was critical of its growing presence in the state and the regional parties' decision to ally with it.¹⁸⁹

After analyzing the evolution and history of political parties in Mizoram and Nagaland, both national and regional parties, the birth of political parties are mainly because of political suitability, dissatisfaction towards the then Assam government administration and to uphold the ethnic identity of the tribals. But the sole agenda of ethnic identity or political party formation based solely on ethnic lines is not the genesis of the formation of political parties in these two states. Factionalism and the love of power has overshadowed the positive development of political parties, claimed by Dr. S.C Jamir¹⁹⁰. Political parties were founded on the basis of gradual political developments in the state like increasing political awareness among the masses, lack of development and to counter the insurgency in the state at the early stage of statehood in both the states, and they became the agent to bring political stability in both the states.

¹⁸⁹ Ibid., 88.

¹⁹⁰ Personal Interview of Dr. S. C. Jamir, former Chief Minister of Nagaland and a veteran Congress leader at his residence in Dimapur, Nagaland on 9th December, 2021

Chapter IV: Role of Insurgency in Identity Politics

This chapter deals with the concept of insurgency and the political upheaval in shaping the identity politics in Mizoram and Nagaland; since insurgency has played a big role in the political development in the two states. The previous chapter titled 'Evolution of Political Parties in Mizoram and Nagaland' already discussed genesis of the formation of political parties in the two states, the basis of identity politics and the role played by the political parties in promoting the ethnic identity.

The meaning of insurgency, historical development of insurgent movement and its impact towards political development, the issue of identity politics and the role in insurgency is dealing in this chapter. The methodology adopted in this chapter besides secondary source is largely based on both secondary sources and personal interviews of various political leaders and prominent citizens in these two states.

4.1 Meaning of Insurgency

The word 'insurgency' refers to a condition of revolt against the state/ government that is less than an organized revolution. It sets rebellion against the ruling authorities to over throw them from power by using force. Insurgencies often start in remote areas where they slowly gain strength by winning the trust of the rural population. Insurgency is not an armed robbers or group of dacoits, rather it is born out of committed ideology or particular issue of a particular group, a tribal or a community, a religion or a secular group. An insurgency may be based on ethnic or religious identity, or its roots may be fundamentally political or economic. Since the rebels are rarely strong enough to confront the national army directly, the rebels (often called guerrillas) tend to resort to bombings, kidnappings, hostages and hijackings.

James Fearon and David Laitin define insurgency as "a technology of military conflict characterized by small, lightly armed bands practicing guerrilla warfare from rural base areas".¹⁹¹ According to K. Anand, it aims at creating mass consciousness to convince the people the cause of militancy and obtain their support. At the same time, it also tries to project itself that the goal is for common goodness of the people.¹⁹²

Guerrilla warfare is the method adopted by most of the insurgent groups, where they ambush or suddenly attack the opposite to harm them, the damage of government's property and buildings are the major target. Along with this, killing of government officials and army, top-ranking politicians are also another method used by the insurgent groups in order to create terror and fear among the people in general. Mass terror and militancy are also employed by the militancy in the later stage, when their action plans failed and being jeopardised. They used this method to spread mental fear among the authorities and the civilians. But militancy is not an end itself in the political culture, the militants can restore to normalcy if there is a chance of peaceful settlement through negotiations with the government authorities.

4.2 Genesis of Insurgency

Nationalism arose throughout Asia, Africa and Latin America, when colonized territories began to rebel against the yoke of Western colonialism since the beginning of the 20th century, and the end of the Second World War marked the end of imperialism and colonialism of European nations. until the end of the 20th century. Within these newly independent nations from Asia, Africa and Latin America, there are minority ethnic groups who did not feel that their cultural identities are not adequately represented, as such, ethno-national movements are

¹⁹¹ Fearon, James D.; Laitin, David D. (2003). "[Ethnicity, Insurgency, and Civil War](#)". *American Political Science Review*. **97** (1): 75–90.

¹⁹² Dr. Chandrika Singh (2009), *North- East India: Politics & Insurgency*, p. 219.

emerging around the world.¹⁹³ Similarly, the tribals of Northeast India feel that they are culturally, ethnically, religiously and territorially separate from mainland India and its culture and people. These distinctions continue to fan their ethnic, cultural, and religious nationalism¹⁹⁴. The arbitrary, if not forcible, inclusion in newly formed nation-states is a major cause of continued ethno-national movements and conflicts.

N.K Das, in his article described insurgency in north- east India is due to the practice of 'social exclusion', claiming that "the British regarded north east India as a defence stratagem, source of raw materials and other products".¹⁹⁵ Social exclusion in India remains the most serious challenge to democracy and development. Communal clashes, ethnic riots, political separatist movements and extremism occur almost routinely and are outward manifestations of India's entrenched culture of social exclusion. Social exclusion in north-eastern India took place very early in the colonial era wherein one notices the slow growth of unrest against the authorities. The perceived sense of marginalization and exclusion on part of the native inhabitants in their hatred towards the strategy of 'Excluded Area'¹⁹⁶, the introduction of 'Inner Line Regulation' and transformation of large section of tribal community into Christianity all created a rift and considerable seclusion.

Insurgency as a movement of the north- east ethnic groups can be explained as an extreme form of ethno- political upsurged as claimed by Lalsangkima Pachuau¹⁹⁷, also the milder version form of geo- ethnic politics like 'regionalism' or autonomy movement have been used in many academic writings. The ethno- politics movements in north east India could be best explain by using the term insurgency and regionalism, as insurgency has affected seven states in the region (Nagaland, Mizoram, Manipur, Assam, Tripura, Arunachal Pradesh and Meghalaya) starting from the early nineteen fifties.

¹⁹³ Tezenlo Thong (2016), *Colonization, Proselytization and Identity: the Nagas and Westernization in Northeast India*, p. 96.

¹⁹⁴ Ibid. p. 96.

¹⁹⁵ N.K. Das (2011), 'Social Exclusion, Misgovernance and Autonomy Movements in Northeast India' *Human Kind*, Vol. 7, p. 38.

¹⁹⁶ Ibid., p. 40.

¹⁹⁷ Lalsangkima Pachuau (2012), *Ethnic Identity and Christianity*, p. 47.

Just in terms of connectivity, be it land, sea or even electronic communication, India's Northeast has since felt completely isolated and in many ways insecurely. The British seemingly found it unwise to integrate this region with the rest of India's mainland due to lack of financial viability and other constraints of management– thus, leaving it more as a buffer zone¹⁹⁸. After independence, Assam was the only state in north east India comprising of both the plains and the hills districts. But the separate attitude of the hill tribes and their separate political identities caused the birth of separate Hill States for the tribals, some borne out of insurgent movements example- Mizoram and Nagaland. All the Hill tribes wanted to maintain their own separate identity with maximum autonomy, leading to the demand of either sovereign independent status or at least full- fledged states of their own with special autonomies under India.¹⁹⁹

The expectation of the Indian Government at that time also keeping in view of the demands of the Hill tribes was to carved out some states by dividing Assam, and hoping this would bring permanent peace, political and economic stability. But the expectation could not bring the desired goal, in fact, the re-organization of Assam turned the politics of the tribal states into a political turmoil leading to insurgency movements in several tribal areas.

The passage of the Assam Language Bill 1961 by the Assam Legislature trying to make Assamese as the official language to prevent the replacement of Assamese and Bengali met a strong resistance from the Hill tribes that unite the leaders of the Hill tribes in forming a new political party “All Party Hills Leaders Conference” (APHLC) that launched a hill state movement.²⁰⁰ The language identity issue and the fear of assimilation by the tribal leaders in the then Assam state led to the formation of a new political party. Besides, the Hill leaders felt the negligence of the Assam government on the issue of development was another issue of sowing the

¹⁹⁸ Rameshwar Roy (2018), ‘Naga Peace Accord: Dilemma for the Rest of India’s Northeast’, *Centre for Land Warfare Studies Journal*, Summer 2018, pp. 1-2.

¹⁹⁹ Dr. Chandrika Singh (2009), *op.cit.*, p. 217.

²⁰⁰ Lalsangkima Pachuau (2012), *op.cit.*, p. 84.

seeds of insurgency. For example, financial issue was the major problem faced by the Mizo District Council right from the beginning in which the Union leaders had indicated their expectation of liberal financial support by India at the time of campaigning to join India in 1947.²⁰¹ But the reality was totally different as the Mizo District Council never had enough funds and ‘the feeling of neglect’ became stronger among the tribals.

Many insurgent groups came up in the region since independence. More than a hundred insurgent groups are said to have been formed in the North East India since independence. All the North Eastern states of India are affected by insurgency in one time or the other and no state could be claimed as insurgency Free State. The reason being, each state has been disturbed by insurgency in one time or the other. Even the states that are free from direct effect of insurgency are still facing its indirect effect. Mizoram is now claimed to be an insurgency-free state after three decades of insurgency ended with the 1986 Mizo Peace Accord.

4.3 Insurgency in Mizoram

The present MNF President and the Chief Minister of Mizoram asserted the MNF insurgent movement as ‘*Mizo Hnam Movement*’²⁰² claiming that its God natural given to individuals about distinctive ethnic, cultural identity and this distinctive identity and the need to preserve them is natural to each ethnic groups and this had naturally formed the concept of *Hnam Thinglung (Nationalism)*.²⁰³ He continued to assert that the need to protect the identity based on language, Christianity, culture and customs were prevailed among the Mizos even during the period of India’s attainment of independence from the British, and it became intensified during the period of the 1950s to the 1960s²⁰⁴ as the wave of influence of Indian Nationalism also spread fast among the economically advanced Mizos in term of speaking the local (Mizo dialect) language, and dressing sense.

²⁰¹ Ibid., p. 84.

²⁰² In Mizo it means Mizo Nationalism.

²⁰³ Zoramthanga (2016), *Mizo Hnam Movement History (A History of Mizo Nationalism Movement)*, p. 14.

²⁰⁴ Ibid., p. 15

4.3.1 Formation of Mizo Cultural Society

The Mizos, in order to preserve their ethnic identity and solidarity among them by the newly educated middle class which rise up in great number during the mid-20th Century, the Mizo Cultural Society was formed in 1959 with Pu B. B. Chawnga, the first president of the Mizo District Council sub- court as its first Chairman, and Mr R. Zuala, a senior government employee at the Deputy Commissioner's Office as its Secretary.²⁰⁵ The Society held a conference in Aizawl in the early 1960s and held demonstration as the Mizo District was severely hit by the famous famine 'Mautam', it was felt that the Assam government was not paying enough attention and there was scarcity of daily necessities in the rural areas of Mizo Hills. This demonstration was done during the visit of the then Assam Chief Minister B. P Chahila, and it was strongly opposed by the District Council authority that led to the prohibition of membership of the society for government employee by the then Deputy Commissioner. Soon the Society defunct with the government hostile attitude.

But then, the famine situation became so severe that the leaders decided to create Mizo National Famine Front (MNFF) in the mid 1960 as a welfare organization to render their service to the people who were in great distress due to Mautam, and to protest against as they called it 'half- hearted policy' of the Assam Government at that time²⁰⁶; with R. Dengthuama as its president and Laldenga as its secretary.

4.3.2 Formation of Mizo National Front (MNF) as a political organization

After the famine was over, the organization decided to transform the Famine Front into a political party named Mizo National Front (MNF) on 28th October, 1961 with Laldenga as its Chairman, R. Vanlawma as Secretary and A.

²⁰⁵ C. Nunthara (1996), *Mizoram: Society and Polity*, p. 195.

²⁰⁶ *Ibid.*, p. 195.

Rohnuna as joint Secretary.²⁰⁷ During the formation of the political party, majority of the leaders of the organization were proposing the demand of full independence from India, but Laldenga did not support this. But other leaders felt that the Mizo Union right from India's independence was pursuing the policy of hill state within India and the demand of APHLC was along this line too. Therefore, it was felt that in order to win the people's trust and support, the party had to take extreme steps.²⁰⁸ This was followed by the conduct of series of public meetings by the MNF leaders across the district that called for Greater Mizoram and secession from India.

The Greater Mizoram, as envisioned by the MNF would comprise of all the Mizo inhabited areas of Mizoram, Manipur, Assam, Tripura, Bangladesh and Burma across international boundaries. Professor C. Nunthara wrote "ethnicity was readily identified as nationalism, and the wider application of the term 'Mizo' was applicable to all the sub- ethnic groups of the Kuki- Chin groups".²⁰⁹ The MNF leaders took the advantage of the fact that the failure of the Assam government in taking relief measures during the famine that led to the distrust towards the Indian government, turning into imparting the idea of rejecting the caste based Hindu society by the minority ethnic groups, and the culture domination by in the sphere of religion where most of the Mizos are Christians are some of the issues played by the MNF in order to win the trust of the people.

The concept of political self- determination on the basis of group identity and solidarity thus became the dominant ideology of the MNF²¹⁰, as this political self-determination had been expressed by the president Laldenga, which he himself informed the representatives of the Church leaders in January, 1967 and said that the MNF stood for political self- determination of the Mizos, but never

²⁰⁷ R. Vanlawma (1965), *Ka Ram leh Kei (My Country and I)*, p. 261.

²⁰⁸ C. Nunthara (1996), *op.cit.*, p. 196.

²⁰⁹ *Ibid.*, p. 196.

²¹⁰ *Ibid.*, p. 197.

supported violence. But it was the only choice that they had for attaining political self- determination.

In the beginning of the formation of the MNF, the Assam government 'played the MNF card'²¹¹ in the early 1960s to defuse the growing opposition of the Mizo Union who was then in power at the Mizo District Council. Further, the MNF established a secret relation with Pakistan government from the late 1963. In December of the same year, the MNF president Laldenga and Lalnunmawia were arrested at East Pakistan's border by the Indian government and kept them in a jail in Shillong. They were later released in the early 1964 after a pledge of loyalty to the government of India. However, this pledge didn't stop Laldenga from organizing armed revolt against the Indian Union. 1964 was spent by the party president in recruiting volunteer for MNF and travelled to rural villages within the district. Within a short span of time, the number of volunteers crossed more than eight thousand.

4.3.3 MNF and insurgent movement

On 30th October, 1965, the MNF party submitted memorandum to the then Prime Minister of India, Lal Bahadur Shastri, in which it declared that Mizoram 'had never been under the Union Government' prior to India's independence and should therefore be left "free to work out on their own destiny".²¹² Later after four months, on the midnight of 28th February, the party began an armed revolution against the Indian government on the line of Mizos are never a part of India and they have the right of self- determination. It was mainly on the line of preserving ethnic identity.

A special armed wing called the Mizo National Army (MNA) was created for that purpose. The MNA consisted of eight infantry "battalions" organized along the

²¹¹ Lalsangkima Pachuau (2012), op.cit., p. 86.

²¹² Ibid., p. 87

lines of the Indian Army. One of the battalions was named after 'Joshua' of the Bible, while the rest were named after the legendary Mizo heroes namely, Chawngbawla, Khuangchera, Lalvunga, Saizahawla, Taitesena, Vanapa and Zampui Manga. The Lion Brigade (Chawngbawla, Khuangchera, Saizahawla and Taitesena battalions) operated in the northern half of the district, while the Dagger Brigade (Joshua, Lalvunga, Vanapa and Zampui Manga) operated in its southern half.²¹³ The MNA consisted of about 2,000 men and was supported by another group called the Mizo National Volunteers (MNV), which consisted of an equal number of irregular volunteers and external supporters.

The seed of insurgency was sowed to different Zo ethnic clans across the state borders, and this is evident from the fact that the meetings of all the Mizos and other political parties was held at Churachandpur (Manipur) in March, 1955, mainly to settle the difference between the Mizo Union and the MNF during this time. The Mizo Union in this meeting repeated its stand to postpone the movement for independence (which they claimed the Indian government would give them after 10 years of being under the Indian Union to the Bordoloi Committee in 1947), at the same time asked the MNF to withdraw its demand for independence of Mizoram as such demand would not be acceptable to the Government of India.²¹⁴ At the same time, both the parties highlighted the wishes and aspirations of the Mizos for 'greater Mizoram' comprising of all inhabited areas of the Mizos across the political and administrative boundaries.²¹⁵ But, then, the MNF decided to go ahead with their original plan of armed revolution for sovereign Mizoram, followed by the set-up of a shadow government called '*Mizoram Sawrkar*' by the MNF High Command.

²¹³ Dr. L. Gyananda Singh (2016), 'Two Decades of Turmoil and Peace in Mizoram', *International Journal of Advance Research in Management and Social Science*, October (2016). Vol.5/ No.10, p. 6.

²¹⁴ S. N. Singh (1994), *Mizoram: Historical, Geographical, Social, Economic, Political & Administrative*, p. 204.

²¹⁵ *Ibid.*, p. 205.

The declaration of independence named 'Operation Jericho', was launched at the midnight of 28th February, 1966²¹⁶ was carried out in the form of armed revolution in which the aim of the MNF was attacked the various posts of security forces within different parts of Mizoram. At the same night, the treasuries at Aizawl and Lunglei was looted by the MNF too. All the towns, except Aizawl was captured by the MNF by 5th March, 1966. But, on the 5th March, the Indian Air Force raid Aizawl town that led to massive destruction of houses and many civilians and the underground members had to fled the town²¹⁷, leading to the gradual capture of different towns by the Indian Military and the MNF volunteered were pushed back to the jungle and interior parts of Mizoram.

The declaration of independence by the MNF contained the following main objectives:

1. The principle of self-determination which was denied to the Mizo ethnic groups will be revived. The Government of India have instituted government to rule over against the Mizo in their own land against their Human Rights and dignity.
2. That the Government of India have been pursuing a policy of exploitive measure to wipe out Christianity.
3. The Mizos are a separate nation having distinct Mongolian characteristics.
4. Curbing freedom of expression, the leaders of the Mizos were arrested and kept in jails without displaying any form of justice.
5. Mizos are dominated, exploited, despised, persecuted, tortured, manhandled and murdered by the Government of India.
6. In spite of the repeated appeal for peaceful settlement of rightful and legitimate demand for self- determination, the Government of India brought exploitive and suppressive measures by employing military power

²¹⁶ K. Vanlalauva (2022), *Independence Puan leh Underground Sawrkar (Buaina bul: A Dumpawl leh Intellectual)*, p. 2.

²¹⁷ R. Vanlawma (1965), op.cit., p. 309.

and waging war against the Mizos as done in the case of the Nagas and the Kashmiris.

7. The Government of India did not allow the Mizo to procure food material during the famine from the neighbouring friendly countries and consequently, the Mizo people faced starvation.
8. Government of India established military bases all over Mizoram, thereby creating atmosphere of cold war, at the same time, nothing has been done for its economic and social development.
9. Because of lack of medical facilities, the people of Mizoram died without having proper medical attention and treatment.²¹⁸

This declaration of independence was signed by the 61 representatives of the MNF led by the President Laldenga.

Consequence upon the declaration of independence from the Indian Union by the MNF through armed rebellion, the Assam Government declared the Mizo hills district as 'disturbed area' on the 2nd of March, 1966, under the Assam Disturbed Area Act 1955 and the Armed Forces (Assam and Manipur) Special Powers Act 1958.²¹⁹ Furthermore, the Indian Government declared the MNF as 'unlawful organization' to weaken the movement of the insurgent group by publishing 'an Extraordinary Gazette Notification of the Government of India' on 6th March, 1966.²²⁰

In June, 1967 the MNF launched 'Operation Crusade' which aimed at consolidating forces in the Mizo inhabited areas of Manipur under the command of 'Lion's Brigade'²²¹, firing between the MNF and the Indian security forces took

²¹⁸ R. Zamawia (2007), *Zofate Zinkawngah (Zalenna Mei a Mit Tur a Ni Lo)*, p. 974.

²¹⁹ Nirmal Nirbedon (1982), *The Dagger Brigade*, p. 78.

²²⁰ L. H. Chhuanawma, Lalthakima, Lal Lawmzuali (2018), *Government and Politics of Mizoram*, p. 34.

²²¹ S. N. Singh (1994), *op.cit.*, p. 212.

place which pushed the MNF underground to the border areas that pushed the MNF volunteers from the main territory of Mizoram to East Pakistan; porous and unchecked borders made it easy for the MNF volunteers to cross the border. Till the birth of Bangladesh, East Pakistan was the operational headquarter of the MNF and the volunteers were trained by the Pakistan army.²²² After the independence of Bangladesh and the formation of Union Territory of Mizoram in 1971, the MNF started moving towards the east and set up its operational based in the jungle of Arakan, where the Arakan insurgents even extended their help to the MNF underground,²²³ and revised their strategy, at the same time, internal rifts started surfacing within the Mizo National Army (MNA).

India's neighbouring countries like Pakistan and China were sympathetic towards the rebels and extended all possible help in imparting guerrilla training inside Pakistan's territory and its main goal was disintegration of India. The MNF volunteers had their access to China as well, the Pro- Peking Burmese Communist Party also gave them security and shelter at Chin Hills and Arakan areas. But the MNF volunteers preferred training in Chittagong Hill Tracts rather than Yunnan province in China, mainly due to ideological and religious (Christianity) issues²²⁴, which showed the ethnic identity based of the MNF party and the influence of Christianity and its impact among the Mizos.

Re- grouping of Mizo villages also known as *Khawkhawm*²²⁵ was one of the most important counter- insurgency response given by the Indian military. The MNF rebels took shelters in the jungles which served as the safest hideouts for them, and for meeting their daily necessities like food, clothing etc, they took from

²²² Ibid., p. 213.

²²³ R. Zamawia (2007), op.cit., p. 270.

²²⁴ S. N. Singh (1994), op.cit., p. 214.

²²⁵ This was a counter- insurgency measures taken by the Government of India which was based on the Defence of India Rules, by which villages were forcible grouped together. Eg: A hundred villages were grouped together in 18 Protected Progressive Villages (PPV) along the Silchar- Aizawl-Lunglei Road.

the interior villages, that later caused torture of the villagers by the security forces of the Indian Army. Therefore, re- grouping of villages was the best measure to control the MNF rebels effectively and to achieve the target.

The MNF insurgency movement was not only confined to the then Mizo District, but it was spread to the areas inhabited by the Zo ethnic groups in Manipur (mostly in Churachandpur areas) and Burma. In fact, many MNV and Army recruitment were from the Gangte and other Zo ethnic groups from Churachandpur. In May 1965, R. Zamawia and Thanthuama went to Manipur to start the MNV known as 'Kawnpui Battallion'²²⁶, Even the MNF General headquarter also approved of visiting different Zo ethnic groups in Manipur and to get their support in preparing for arms insurgency. R. Zamawia claimed that they stayed at Manipur, Imphal and at Lamka (Churachandpur) for about one week having interactions with different Zo ethnic group leaders who spoke different dialects than Lusei.²²⁷

As Lalchungnunga has claimed "Mizo regionalism developed into an extreme form with the MNF movement with complete secession from the Indian Union. To the MNF, Mizoram was not just a regional entity but a national policy. They conceived of Mizo as a nation and attempted to vindicate 'Mizo nationalism' by appealing to the ethnic, socio- cultural, historical, political and religious sentiments of the people".²²⁸

It is worthy to note that there were female volunteers in the movement of MNF when insurgency broke out in March, 1966. Even though there is no proper record, hundreds of women submitted their names to Lalthankunga, who was an acting information director of the then underground MNF government, and

²²⁶ R. Zamawia (2007), op.cit., p. 251.

²²⁷ Ibid., p. 253.

²²⁸ Lalchungnunga (1994), *Mizoram: Politics of Regionalism and National Integration*, p. 86.

volunteered for the cause of Mizo nationalism.²²⁹ They had entered the movement in their early twenties, and 18 women volunteers entered the MNF camp in East Pakistan (now Bangladesh) and served as nurses and office staffs and performed important supporting roles to the male volunteers; some even entered the battlefield to fight against the Indian Security Forces. Women who were left in the villages were also encouraged to provide, information food and shelter to the MNF volunteers without the knowledge of the government when they hid among the masses before moving to East Pakistan.²³⁰

4.3.4 Christian Identity & MNF Movement

The MNF rebels in the jungle, in order to uphold their identity as a Mizo and as a Christian organized itself in such a way to uphold their true identity as a Mizo and as a Christian. The assertion of upholding Mizo ethnic identity was found in first objective of the MNF in their declaration of independence in which the party asserted ‘the principle of self-determination which was denied to the Mizo ethnic groups will be revived’.²³¹ Wherever it was possible, the MNF underground set up Church and chapels at their camps in the jungle, since one of the objectives of the party was ‘*Pathian leh kan Ram tan*’.²³² Zoramthanga, the present Chief Minister and President of the party in his book mentioned that evangelism is one of the main goals even during the underground movement, and to lead the worship service, Mizo Evangelical Committee (MEC) was formed²³³. The MEC took initiative in appointing ‘*Tirhkoh*’²³⁴ through interviews to conduct ceremonies and rituals according to Christian traditions. During 1966-76, around 85% of the people were fully behind the movement, large portions of the population join the insurgent group considering themselves a crusader for their religious beliefs.

²²⁹ Mary Vanlaltanpuii (2018), *Women’s Action in the Mizo National Movement 1966- 1987*, p. 5.

²³⁰ Ibid. p. 34.

²³¹ R. Zamawia (2007), op.cit., p. 974.

²³² meaning for God and for our Land.

²³³ Zoramthanga (2016), op.cit., p. 64.

²³⁴ Tirhkoh is a Mizo term for preacher, who are non- ordained pastors but mission workers.

When the MNF underground decided to go to China from Arakan Camp in 1973, the underground decided to celebrate an advance Christmas on the night of 22nd December, 1973; as Christmas is one of the biggest and most important festivals of the Christians. *Tirhkoh* Lalngurliana preached the Christmas sermon and the gathering sang Christmas hymns till one in the morning and ended the service with the Lord's prayer²³⁵. Zoramthanga claimed that even during the darkest days and lowest days of the insurgent groups at Arakan Camp during the period of 1972- 1974 that the Holy Spirit filled the underground cadres and continuous singing of hymns, dancing and praying were the permanent features and continuous activities.²³⁶

The construction of Mizo National identity that developed in the mid-21st Century was the work of modern liberal Mizo middle class claimed by Sajal Nag, "this identity was based on cultural markers along with liberal, cosmopolitan and secular".²³⁷ He asserted that the famine that took place in the Mizo districts after every 50 years, was the advantage point for the liberal middle class to assert identity politics and to inculcate the spirit of Mizo nationalism, the primary objective being achieving social equality based on sovereignty by seeing the independence of smaller nations after the end of colonialism and imperialism at the end of the Second World War. He further claimed that the concept of *the theory of internal colonialism*²³⁸ invoked by the MNF focused on the situation of small, subordinate communities in the underdevelopment regions within a state which intensifies political oppression and cultural domination of minority ethnic groups. the MNF through their effective direct contact programmes and relief

²³⁵ C. Zama (2019), *Zin Kawng Thui (Zalenna sualtute China rama an kal chanchin)*, p. 91.

²³⁶ Zoramthanga (2016), *op.cit.*, p. 114.

²³⁷ Sajal Nag (2008), *Pied Pipers in North- East India: Bamboo- flowers, Rat- famine and the Politics of Philanthropy (1881- 2007)*, p. 267.

²³⁸ This theory implies two stage arguments, firstly trying to explain the causes of uneven economic development between different regional communities within a state, and the second arguments explains the disparities are the fundamental cause of the emergence of ethnic nationalist movements by the cultural groups.

measures, and the neglect on the part of the Government of India further helped the MNF in successfully launching the insurgent movements in the Mizo Hills.²³⁹

4.3.5 Role of the Church and the MNF Insurgency

In Mizoram the MNF pioneered the practice of mingle politics and religion. Based on this ideology, MNF lectured the nationalism they strive for was supported by God. Laldenga, the then President of the MNF justified the anti- state activity of the organization and claiming that since the volunteers need to hide inside the jungle in fighting for independence, they left the responsibility to the Church leaders to stand for the Mizos.²⁴⁰ Even before the beginning of insurgency, such an idea had gained huge support among the people and different Church denominations. Some Churches like Manaseh Church, Maicham Kohhran and Ramthuthlung Church preached MNF propaganda as a part of their beliefs.²⁴¹ For the MNF, religion already inhabits one of the utmost important positions in their nationalism. Due to this they had always remunerated intense respect for the Church and the people who are closely connected with it. This on the other hand, allows Church leaders to play the important role of peace emissary during the insurgency period.

The above-mentioned features clearly signify not only ethnic identity, but the deep implication of religious identity had impact on the insurgent movements of the MNF, and because of the positive role played by the Church, permanent peace solution and peace accord could be signed between the underground MNF and the Indian government. In September, 1966, the Presbyterian Church of Mizoram immediately formed 'A Synod Standing Committee'²⁴², it immediately called for a meeting of church leaders from the Baptist and Presbyterian Churches

²³⁹ Sajal Nag (2008), op.cit., p. 268.

²⁴⁰ Lalmuana Guite (2020), 'National and Religious Identity of the Mizo with Special Reference to Mizoram Insurgency', *Research Journal of Humanities and Social Sciences*, Vol. 11, Issue- 4.

²⁴¹ Dr. L. Gyananda Singh (2016), op.cit., p. 10.

²⁴² See-<https://www.eastmojo.com/news/2018/11/20/mizoram-how-the-church-calls-the-shots-during-state-elections> accessed on 19.7.2019.

in the south and north of Mizoram respectively²⁴³ to discuss their role amidst the public distress.

This was followed by the formation of 'Peace Committee' in 1966 by Rev. Dr. Zairema, Rev. Dr. H. S Luaia and other Church leaders; which acted as mediators between the government and the undergrounds to promote relationship between the people and the security force, not to oppose the underground MNF or the Government of India. One of them was Reverend Zairema who ventured out the MNF leaders in their hideouts in a bid to bring peace talks between MNF and the Govt. of India taking a great risk even of his own life. In 1983 there was an abrupt termination of dialogue between the MNF and the Govt. of India, much to the dismay of the Mizo people²⁴⁴. Various Church leaders met together and passed a resolution to resume peace dialogue. Among the active church leaders was Rev. V.L.Rawna, Seventh Day Adventist Pastor, he went to London to meet Laldenga as reported by some newspapers.²⁴⁵ It was also reported that Laldenga advised him to continue his efforts to bring peace in Mizoram.

The birth of Bangladesh as a nation in 1971 made the course of MNF insurgency more difficult as the MNF had to shift its based to Arakan²⁴⁶, but the Burma government didn't allow the MNF to settle for a long time, and support coming from China and Pakistan started declining, this had weakened the spirit and actual activities of the MNF. Above all the Mizo people continuously call for peace because they have been suffering for too long. Laldenga and the other MNA leaders also began to realise the resource they possessed would not be sufficient to give them the independence they demanded. Many intellectuals from the volunteer openly expressed their opinion in favour of supporting the Church leader's peace programme. They consider the best choice for them was to follow the process of

²⁴³ Chawngsailova (2012), *Mizoram During 20 Dark Years*, p. 14.

²⁴⁴ Dr. L. Gyananda Singh (2016), *op.cit.*, p. 10.

²⁴⁵ Lalnithanga P. (2010), *Emergence of Mizoram, 3rd Edition*, p. 35.

²⁴⁶ R. Zamawia (2007), *op.cit.*, p. 741.

peace negotiation under the umbrella of Indian Constitution. But the MNF cannot make a move since Indian Government chose to keep silent. At this intense moment MNF desperately needed a mediator to deliver their message to New Delhi. Laldenga cannot put his trust in any NGO's or political parties. The only body he trusted and wanted to depend upon was the Church and the Church alone.

Therefore, Zoram Kohhran Hruaitute Committee reformed into 'Mizoram Kohhran Hruaitute Committee' (MKHC) on August 13th 1982.²⁴⁷ The committee was created to revive the peace negotiation between MNF and Indian Government which was put into hold for some time. Rev. Lalsawma during his visit to London in 1984, expressed to Laldenga about the meeting conducted between Church leaders and Prime Minister Indira Gandhi during her visit to Mizoram. He conveyed a statement made by Indira Gandhi that 'if Laldenga wants peace talk, it must begin with him',²⁴⁸. Laldenga told him the only people whom he can trust at that moment were the Church leaders. If he wishes to talk to anyone it would be the Church whom he would approach. Shortly after this meeting took place, Laldenga landed at New Delhi to resume peace negotiation. But the untimely assassination of Indira Gandhi had doomed the peace negotiation once again.

On 28th March, 1985, MKHC Executive Meeting decided to send a representative to New Delhi to meet Prime Minister Rajiv Gandhi. Rev. Lalsawma, Rev. Dr.Lianzuala, Rev. R. Lalrinsanga, Pu. V.L. Bela, Maj. Sawichhunga and Maj. Thansanga went to Delhi as a representative of the peace emissary.²⁴⁹ They had separate meetings with Prime Minister Rajiv Gandhi and Laldenga separately. After staying at Delhi for five days they were able to convince both parties to begin negotiation on a long-lasting peace agreement.

²⁴⁷ Ibid., p. 743.

²⁴⁸ Lalmuana Guite (2020), op.cit.

²⁴⁹ Ibid.,

At the initial phase of insurgency, the Church could not support the action of the MNF as it could not initiate normal activities many a time due to various offshoots of insurgency namely, curfew, identification parade of villagers for identifying underground cadres, restriction of movement of people at night, conduct of operation at any time to check the entry of underground cadres in the village.²⁵⁰ Killings, the use of force and torture because counter attacked by the Indian Security Forces and the MNF were against the principles and belief of the Mizo Christians. These factors forced the Church leaders to get involved and be the mediator for permanent peace.

From the beginning of insurgency till the signing of the Peace Accord in 1986, the Church played the most crucial role both socially and politically. The momentous position occupied by Christianity in the socio-cultural, traditional and communal lives of the Mizo's breed's tangible respect. Therefore, religious and national identities are inseparable rather than embedded in the flesh and blood of the people. This became the only reason why the Church was allowed to play the mediator role between MNF and Indian Government. There are times the MNF can opt for different ideologies like Communism of China. However, they never wanted to shift beliefs and faith from Christianity. The MNF firmly stands with the theme, '*Pathian leh kan Ram tan*'.²⁵¹

4.4 Insurgency in Nagaland

Dr. Chandrika Singh has claimed that the rise and growth of insurgency in Nagaland shows the fact that it has always remained the victim of personality clashes of the leaders of Naga underground and their division on the line of factionalism and tribalism²⁵². Naga insurgency began just after a few years of India's independence in

²⁵⁰ Dr. Jangkhongam Dounjel (2011), *Impact of Insurgency in Mizoram with Special Reference to the Sixth Schedule Area*, See-<https://www.researchgate.net/publication/331951102>. Accessed on 31. 10. 2021.

²⁵¹ For God and for my country.

²⁵² Dr. Chandrika Singh (2009), *op.cit.*, p. 224.

which the Nagas claimed that “Nagas were a nation completely free from time immemorial” and “the Naga should have the right for self- determination”.²⁵³

Among the ethnic tribes of the north- east, the Nagas were the first to come out with the slogan of demand for sovereign Nagaland under the leadership of A. Z. Phizo. This main issue of sovereign Nagaland out of India was on the line of distinctive ethnic identity from the mainland India. The general sentiment and oft-stated catchphrase among the Nagas is “We are Indians not by choice, but by force.” The main political argument espoused by the Nagas for refusing to be a part of the Indian union is that the Nagas were not conquered by India; furthermore, the Nagas were neither asked nor consulted by any party, nor did they consent or agree, to be a party to independent India or Myanmar when the British withdrew from the region.²⁵⁴

Likewise, several ethnic rebel groups in Myanmar, dissatisfied with the post-colonial government, demanded greater autonomy or a separate state. They feel that their voices and concerns have not been taken into account in the formation of modern Myanmar. Like its neighbour India, Myanmar is ethnically and culturally extremely diverse and complex. Most ethnic communities inhabit Myanmar’s international borders. In fact, ethnic minorities believe they were grossly wronged when their ancestral homelands were divided by nation-state territorial border processes without the consent or knowledge of indigenous inhabitants. The experience of fragmentation and disenfranchisement has generated the desire for a separate nation-state, or autonomy, and armed resistance.²⁵⁵

Most contemporary forms of identity stem largely from the struggle against colonialism and its atrocities. The formation of Naga identity is no exception. In other words, it is the result of their western colonization. The formation of a collective Naga identity after Western colonization gradually evolved into the ethnic

²⁵³ Ibid., p. 222.

²⁵⁴ Tezenlo Thong (2016), op.cit., p. 100.

²⁵⁵ Ibid. p. 97.

nationalism. The Nagas have seen and experienced, with tragic consequences, their homeland being overrun by strangers over and over again, which has prompted a desire to demarcate their homeland with the hope of thwarting any future invasions.²⁵⁶

Cultural or ethnic identity and territorial independence are intertwined in the Naga nationalist movement. Surrounded by densely populated nations, especially Bangladesh, China, and India, the Nagas have a desire to safeguard their identity by politically demarcating their territory based on “ancestry” or “ancestral homeland”.²⁵⁷ The insurgent leaders and many pro- insurgent supporters do not claim themselves as seeking independence, nor see themselves as ‘separatists or secessionists’ as claimed the Indian state and many political writers. The desire for a political identity through the creation of a sovereign Naga nation-state is concurrent with the desire to preserve their newfound collective identity as a nation. The formation of the Naga nation cannot be described primarily or instrumentally, but must be considered from both perspectives.

The issue of tribalism remained the greatest hurdle for unity among the Naga insurgents. Rivalry and power fighting among the Naga militant leaders right from the beginning are some of the major concerned that hurdle permanent political peace solution in the state. Dr. Shurhozilie Liezietsu, a veteran politician, the President of Naga People’s Front (NPF) and the ex- Chief Minister of Nagaland claimed that the party is deeply rooted in the unique history of Naga people, and claiming other parties as just an association without much principle.

When insurgency was started by the Naga National Council (NNC)²⁵⁸ under the leadership of Phizo in the mid-1950s, the main plea of Phizo and his associates were that Naga Hills was never a part of India and they have every right for self-

²⁵⁶ John Thomas (2016), *Evangelizing the Nation: Religion and the formation of Naga Political Identity*, p. 259.

²⁵⁷ Tezenlo Thong (2016), *op.cit.*, p. 106.

²⁵⁸ Naga National Council was a political platform of the Naga intelligence with tribal representatives that was founded in February, 1946.

determination, and trying to convince the Nagas that they have every right and valid reason for declaring war against the Indian government, and the Nagas contributed voluntarily in terms of economic assistance or voluntarism towards the NNC. During this time before insurgency broke out, the Government of India declared Naga Hill areas as Disturbed Areas under the Disturbed Area Act which gives powers to the security forces to deal with Naga guerrillas with the extreme powers on one hand; and on the other hand, sending many good-will missions to the Naga Hills to befriend with the Nagas.²⁵⁹ On 22nd March, 1956, the NNC declared the establishment of a Federal Government and drafted constitution which declared Nagaland as 'People's Sovereign Republic of Nagaland (PSRN) with a *Hoho*²⁶⁰ and Presidential form of Naga Republic elected by the people consisting of fifteen *Kilonsers*²⁶¹ including the Prime Minister. It also included provision for civil administration and military organization.²⁶²

Right from the starting of the NNC as a political organization, the inclusion of the word 'national' reflects the intensity of the feelings of the Nagas for a nation, claimed by Zhimomi.²⁶³ But at the same time, the NNC, an association which was represented by the various ethnic tribes did not have the same objectives. Some of the important objectives of the Naga National Council were:

- (a) A small group leading for continuous of the Naga areas within India as an integral, but autonomous entity.
- (b) A group sharing the idea for integration of the tribal areas of Naga Hills, NEFA, Manipur and Burma to form 'British Governed Crown Colony', 'Trust Territory' or 'Mandatory State'.
- (c) A majority group pleading for special relationship with India until sufficient experience had been attained to govern an independent Nagaland

²⁵⁹ Kuohei K. Zhimomi (2004), *Politics and Militancy in Nagaland*, p. 37.

²⁶⁰ Meaning Parliament.

²⁶¹ Meaning Ministers.

²⁶² Kuohei K. Zhimomi (2004), *op.cit.*, p. 38.

²⁶³ *Ibid.*, p. 44.

(d) A group of few having strong feeling and clamouring for sovereign independent Nagaland with immediate effect.²⁶⁴

It is clear from the above points that the ideas and perspectives of different tribes of the Nagas did not have the same visions and objectives, yet the distinctive identity which lead to the feeling of separate nationalism led to the starting of NNC and its political drive for sovereign state purely based on Naga ethnic identity. Right from the beginning, the leaders of the NNC and Phizo had different approach, while Phizo wanted to achieve their objective quickly, but the NNC opted for slow and quieter action. Phizo started house to house visiting, trying to influence the masses the significance and urgency of sovereign Nagaland. With the support pouring in, he openly began to advocate the use of violent means to achieve independence.²⁶⁵

The Naga rebels got moral and material supports from China and Pakistan, got itself fully prepared with arms and ammunitions, the Naga Federal Government (NFG) began attacking the Indian Security Forces and properties of the government, which led to a mass terror and psychological fear all over the territories of the Nagas. At the initial stage, it was difficult for the Indian Security forces to control the situation, as they were concentration within the interior jungles and villages, and the areas were not familiar to the security forces. Besides, the Naga youths were enthusiastic, they were familiar with the hilly areas and jungles, the past glory of the Naga and their ethnicity gave them pride and boast their morale, that gave them moral strength to fight against the Indian Security Forces. 22nd March, 1956, the Naga rebels declared the establishment of a Federal Government of Nagaland at Phensinyu, a Rengma tribe village in Kohima area, and hoisted its national flag which was a direct challenge to the Constitution of India.²⁶⁶ The period between 1953- 1956 witnessed the intensification of violence in both Naga Hills and Tuensang Areas, that even effected the plain areas of Assam and Manipur.

²⁶⁴ Ibid., p. 44.

²⁶⁵ Ibid., p. 45

²⁶⁶ Ihezhe Zhimomi (2021), *A Brief Survey of Naga History*, p. 125.

To counter the insurgency, the Indian Government instructed the Assam Government to take stern action against the Naga rebels, this was followed by the declaration of the whole area of Naga Hills as 'Disturbed Area under the Naga Hills Disturbed Ordinance and Assam Maintenance of Public Order by the Assam Government that came into force in April, 1956.²⁶⁷ This was followed by the enactment of a Special Powers Act with a view to maintain law and order, and to stop violence and bloodshed.

One major consequence of the bloodshed violence in the 1965 declaration of independence was that of some villages who sided the underground secretly by providing them shelter and information about the activities of the Indian Army secretly. At the same time, there were many villages who remained neutral, some claimed that they were compelled to provide assistance to the underground in terms of giving money, food and shelter, secret information etc, failing to provide such demands called for torture or capital punishment.²⁶⁸ On the other hand, the Indian Security forces raid the Naga villages on the base of suspicion inflicting severe punishments to the villagers. The excessive infamous acts committed by the Indian Security Forces in terms of village grouping system had helped the NNC in consolidating its support among the Nagas as a whole.²⁶⁹

4.4.1 Insurgency After Statehood

By the mid-1956, intensity of the insurgent activities began to decline as there arose moderate leaders among the NNC, and to support this, the Government of India realised that political alternative has to be given to the Nagas first in order to suppress the movement slowly. At the same time, leaders of Baptist Church also stepped ahead to bring peace and normalcy, which were followed by the moderate Naga leaders started disassociate themselves with Phizo and his team. The negotiation under the initiative of the moderate Naga leaders, Church leaders, a

²⁶⁷ Kuhoi K. Zhimomi (2004), *op.cit.*, p. 49.

²⁶⁸ Personal interview of Dr. Kuhoi Zhimomi at his residence in Dimapur, Nagaland on 10th December, 2021.

²⁶⁹ Udayon Misra (2014), *India's North East: Identity, Movements, State and Civil Society*, p. 142.

separate new political unit ‘Naga Hills Tuensang Area’ was formed, that gave more autonomy to handle their own administration by themselves.²⁷⁰

Under the leadership of Imkongliba Ao, Naga People’s Convention was convened, and in the third convention held in October, 1959, the convention prepared a draft memorandum listing 16 demands. On the basis of this, Naga leaders approached the Prime Minister of India for granting full- fledged state, and the negotiation led for the creation of Nagaland State.²⁷¹ This negotiation and granting of statehood was a big blow to Phizo and his associates, the NNC was divided because of this. A new political party known as “Reformed Committee” was formed by the who disassociate with Phizo in 1957.²⁷²

The period from the early 1550s till the 1960s witnessed the development of Naga nationalism and the hegemony of the Phizo- led NNC.²⁷³ The insurgency movement and Naga militancy was also dominated and politicized based on ethnic lines. At some point, the movement was dominated by the Sema tribes. But soon after the failure of peace talks in 1967, the leadership was shifted to the Angami tribes.²⁷⁴ This was seen from the fact that when Muivah Angami was appointed as the President of the Federal Government of Nagaland. The assassination of the Sema underground leader Kaito Sema was doubtful to the Sema Nagas in which they believed Angami’s hand behind the murder. Then the Semas kidnapped an Angami leader and kept under captivity for several months. By 1968, the Naga militancy was turned into tribalism, as claimed by Chandrika Singh.²⁷⁵ The NNC at this juncture drew its leadership from the middleclass of the Nagas, at the same time without disturbing the traditional leadership of the tribal councils²⁷⁶, which was the growing strength of the NNC.

²⁷⁰ Kuohei K. Zhimomi (2004), op.cit., p. 55.

²⁷¹ Ibid., p. 57.

²⁷² Ibid., p. 57

²⁷³ Udayon Misra (2014), op.cit., p. 142.

²⁷⁴ Dr. Chandrika Singh (2009), op.cit., p. 225.

²⁷⁵ Ibid.,225.

²⁷⁶ Udayon Misra (2014), op.cit., p. 143.

After the attainment of statehood, the initiation of peace talks between the Federal Government of Nagaland and the Indian government had started, after the Baptist Church leaders called a convention on 24th February, 1964 at Wokha urging the FNG and the Government of India, four names were suggested for the members of the proposed Peace Mission. The inclusion of Rev. Michael Scott from London, who was a friend of Phizo won the trust of the underground Nagas, who considered his inclusion in the Peace Mission as ‘a tremendous morale booster’ for the Naga community, considering him as ‘International Observer’.²⁷⁷ The efforts of the leaders of the Baptist Church in organizing Peace Mission was welcomed by all sections of the Naga societies including the political parties.

The members of the Peace Mission arrived Kohima in March 1964. It took several months for the Peace Mission to convince both the underground rebels and the Government of India to accept a draft agreement containing the ceasefire agreement terms and conditions. Finally, cease-fire agreement was reached upon, that came into effective 6th September, 1964. This agreement provided that the ceasefire would cover all areas inhabited by the Nagas in Ukhrul, Tamenglong and Moa sub- divisions of Manipur²⁷⁸; this clearly indicated that the insurgent movement at based on ethnic lines across different administrative units within India. But unfortunately, there was no fruitful outcome after two rounds of peace talks as the Naga representatives restated te demand for sovereign Nagaland which was not accepted by the other party, as various talks were held, but there was no solution to the problem. The ceasefire which begun in 1964 in Nagaland failed by 1967 even though there was no official declaration from both the parties in withdrawal of the ceasefire in Nagaland and Naga ethnic inhabited areas.

After the creation of full- fledged Nagaland State under the Indian Union, political parties and political organizations emerged, showing policies and programmes of the parties. At the same time, the activities and violence especially after the failure of cease-fire, the underground militants tried its best to stop the growth of party politics in Nagaland, using violence in an intensified manner to stop

²⁷⁷ Kuohei K. Zhimomi (2004), op.cit., p. 81.

²⁷⁸ *ibid.*, p. 85.

all political activities within the democratic realm. In a way, this highlighted politics and militancy in Nagaland developed side by side especially in post- statehood political development. Both claimed to represent the interest of the ethnic, culture, religion and the future of the Naga society, yet their approach are different.

Due to the establishment of political parties and democratic set- up of the state of Nagaland, the political culture within the democratic framework was slowly stabilizing, and the interest of the masses had also increased tremendously. This along with the failure of peace talks had given a setback to insurgency movement and there arose disagreement inside the Federal Government of Nagaland. The change in the Federal Army General position led to disagreement among the Semas and the Angamis within the rebels, and the presidentship of the FGN was also passed into the hands of the Angami from the Sema tribe. In addition to this, the appointment of a Tangkhul Naga as the Home Minister of FGN created another problem and inter- tribalism issue within the insurgent group²⁷⁹. By 1974, it had become clear that politics of militancy and insurgency was losing its support from the masses.

With the democratic political development, the political culture that was developed in Nagaland took a dynamic turn towards corruption, nepotism and a way of earning money. This was followed by many underground joining politics and giving up militancy, showing the merger of politics with militancy and the growing closeness between political parties and insurgency. The period of the 1960s and the 1970s witnessed the intensification of rivalries among the different ethnic groups within the Naga movement, especially during before and after the signing of Shillong Accord, which was rejected by many insurgent leaders who opted to continue with insurgency for Sovereign Nagaland.

4.4.2 Shillong Accord and the birth of Nationalist Socialist Council of Nagaland (NSCN)

²⁷⁹ Ibid., p. 121.

During the period of National Emergency of India in 1975, the famous ‘Shillong Accord’ was signed between the representatives of the underground and the Government of India.²⁸⁰ The three major points of the Accord were-

- (a) The representatives of the underground organizations conveyed their decision of their own violation, to accept without condition, the Constitution of India.
- (b) It was agreed that the arms, now underground, would be brought and deposited at appointed places.
- (c) It was agreed that the representatives of the underground organizations should have reasonable time to formulate other issues for the discussions for the final settlement.²⁸¹

The Shillong Accord and surrendering of arms were not acceptable to some sections of the Naga insurgents, it became controversial to some because when the Accord was signed, some leaders were out of Nagaland and stood firm to their ultimate goal of Naga independence. This led to the formation of a new underground organization called Nationalist Socialist Council of Nagaland (NSCN) on 31st January, 1980 headed by Isaac Swu, T. Muivah and S. S. Khaplang, based on the rejection of Shillong Accord.²⁸² The NSCN denounced the leadership of Phizo, on the ground that when Shillong Accord as signed, Phizo as the leader of the NNC was not present in Shillong in the final settlement, and Muivah was not the signatory of the Accord, the leaders of the NSCN claimed that Shillong Accord was not acceptable to them.

The military structure of the NSCN was quite different from the NNC structure, that left lesser opportunity for alternative voices but differences arose among the leaders of the underground that led to the split of the NSCN. Tribalism and personal rivalry between the leaders of different ethnic tribes hampered unity of the Naga militancy. By 1984, the NSCN was split into two- one group led by S.S. Khaplang, who was a close associate of Phizo, known as NSCN (K) and another

²⁸⁰ Ibid., p. 122.

²⁸¹ Ibid., p. 241.

²⁸² Kuohei K. Zhimomi (2004), op.cit., p. 137.

group led to T. Muivah and Isaac Swu known as NSCN (IM).²⁸³ Muivah belongs to Tangkhul Naga from Ukhrul in Manipur, S.S Khaplang belongs to Hemi Naga from Myanmar, and Isaac Swu belongs to Sema Naga from Zunheboto in Nagaland. Once again, tribalism and ethnic issue was the main factor responsible to the split of NSCN. Ever since then, the two factions of the NSCN have been fighting and hundreds of lives have lost in the turf war between the two groups.²⁸⁴

The issue of insurgency and Christianity identity goes a long way in Nagaland's political developments and identity assertion. One of the objectives of Phizo's Naga National Council (NNC) was 'Nagaland for Christ'. Naga insurgent groups like the NNC and NSCN in order to preached a puritanical lifestyle that banned alcohol and drugs and discouraged sexual promiscuity in an attempt to 'purify' the nation and to encourage God to fulfil his covenant of making 'Nagaland for Christ'. In order to establish this covenant, schools and clinics were established by the NSCN that went hand in hand with Christian teachings²⁸⁵, and the underground soldiers conducted missionary activities in Burmese Naga territory by converting over 40000 'animists' to Christianity. Biblical names such as Zion, Canaan or the NSCN-IM headquarter Hebron, are used as camp names that signify the pervasiveness of Christian symbols.

The period of the early 1990s witnessed clashes not only between the Naga insurgent groups and the Security Forces, but also violent clashes between the ethnic groups of Kuki and Tangkhul Nagas in Ukhrul and Chandel District of Manipur²⁸⁶, these led to a steady rise of militancy because of insurgency and the impact of Naga insurgency even crossed the state of Manipur based on ethnic lines. Because of numerous counter insurgency operations by the Indian Security forces that weakened the strength of the NSCN, NSCN(IM) offered to negotiate for a truce with the

²⁸³ Ibid., p. 141.

²⁸⁴ Udayon Misra (2014), op.cit., p. 146.

²⁸⁵ Arkotong Longkumer (2018), 'Bible, Guns and Land: Sovereignty and Nationalism amongst the Nagas of India', *Nations and Nationalism*, 2018, p. 14. Accessed on 31st August, 2021.

²⁸⁶ Gurinder Singh (2007) 'A Decade of Ceasefire in Nagaland', *Strategic Analysis*, September 2007, Vol. 31, No. 5, p. 186. Accessed on 7 July, 2017.

Government of India. On July 31, 1996, NSCN (IM) set three preconditions for talks with Government of India:

1. Negotiation should focus on sovereignty.
2. Talks to be held in in a third country.
3. There should be a third-party mediator.²⁸⁷

Under the Prime Minister HD Deve Gowda, initial talks were initiated in Geneva from 4th March, 1997, that led to the signing of ceasefire agreement between the Government of India and NSCN (IM) on 24th July, 1997.²⁸⁸ A Cease Fire Monitoring Group (CFMG) comprising representatives of NSCN (IM), NGOs and persons nominated by the Government of India was set up at Kohima which met at regular intervals.

Initially at the early phase of the split of the NSCN, there was a claim about the NSCN (K) being set up by the Government of India to bring division and weaken the NSCN, and also some tried to dismiss this clam. But over the years, the NSCN (K) survived till today despite the organization in terms of manpower and armaments are much lesser than the NSCN (IM). At the same time, the position of the NSCN-IM seemed to be in a higher place than its counterpart. When peace talks were resumed by the Government of India with the NSCN (IM) in 1997, alternate groups and voices within the Naga ethnic groups started marking their presence. Accordingly in 2001, New Delhi announced its ceasefire with the NSCN (K) and declared all efforts were taken to include the smaller groups in the peace process.²⁸⁹

At the same time, the cease fire agreement with the NSCN (IM) and the issue of unified Nagalim under one administrative unit have resulted in immense resistance from Manipur which forced the Government of India to withdraw this even the NSCN (K) had its own position regarding the question of territorial integration of Naga inhabited areas, resulting in series of killings between the two factions in 2003-

²⁸⁷ Ibid., p. 187.

²⁸⁸ Ibid., p. 187.

²⁸⁹ Udayon Misra (2014), op.cit., p. 147.

2004, 2006- 2007, these violence obliged the major civil societies to in Nagaland across different ethnic groups to form Forum for Reconciliation in 2008 to stop killings between the two factions of the insurgent groups.²⁹⁰ This could not be dismissed as mere inter- tribal rivalry between the two groups, but as the intervention of alternative voices grew stronger. The question of territorial integration based on ethnic lines as demanded by the insurgent groups is in doubt.

Many Nagas today accepted the presence of democratic framework of the Indian constitution which is not reflected in the organization structure and objective of the Naga insurgent outfit. The two important issues posted by the Naga movement are the question of self- determination and the question of greater Nagalim. And in order to achieve these goals, the question of reconciliation among the different ethnic groups of Nagas has been a pertaining emerging issue.²⁹¹

The NSCN (IM) had used the opportunity of the ceasefire period to strengthen and consolidate itself as an organization. It gained almost the total control of the state machinery and it had been claimed that the approval of the insurgent groups regarding the selection of political party candidates during the state elections across political parties is an emerging political development in Nagaland. Another prominent feature of Naga insurgency is extortion as claimed by Gurinder Singh. In his article, he alleged that both factions of the NSCN have been extorting money from both the government employees as well as the trading community across different sections of Naga society.²⁹² The NSCN (IM) institutionalized extortion and created a massive tax collection network, making insurgency as an agent of big business. The NSCN (IM) has also assumed the role of ‘social guardians’ and the group runs a parallel judicial system²⁹³. The group arrests; conducts trials and imposes punishments (including capital punishment). In recent years, the NSCN (IM) has also positioned itself as the custodian of the culture and heritage of the Naga society. In the recent years, NSCN (IM) has also positioned itself as the

²⁹⁰ Ibid., p. 147.

²⁹¹ Ibid., p. 148.

²⁹² Gurinder Singh (2007), op. cit., p. 818.

²⁹³ Ibid., p. 818.

custodian of the culture and heritage of the Naga society. Institutions like the NagaHoho, the Naga Mother's Association and the Naga Students Federation are being used by proxy.²⁹⁴

The clear expression of Christian identity in the preamble of the NNC is significant because it acknowledges the extensive influence of Christianity on national life. The fact that the American Baptist Foreign Missionary Society (ABFMS) played a role in instigating Naga nationalism is a question that has not really been addressed, partly because the ABFMS did not want to portray itself as involved in indigenous politics, particularly since they were merely guests of the British and then the Indian state.²⁹⁵

The issue of ethnic identity and tribalism has always been one of the root causes of insurgency in Nagaland, but at the same time, the formation of political parties is not solely based on ethnic identities or tribalism, but rather on the opportunity that came up to fight for political space or greater autonomy for the Nagas as a whole, that includes the Nagas reside in the neighbouring areas of the present political map of Nagaland.²⁹⁶ In fact, Naga nationalism did much to shape the collective Naga ethnic identity, the movement influenced many other ethno-nationalist movements in the region. The Naga issue is a political problem that should be resolved politically, the President of the NPF also alleged that right from the initial stage of Naga insurgency, the Indian government claimed it as 'a law-and-order problem', but the Naga leaders refused to accept it as a law-and-order problem²⁹⁷. The Nagas right from the beginning do not claim themselves as Indians, as they are ethnically and culturally different.

When the 16- Points Agreement was signed under the initiative of Naga People's Convention (NPC) between the insurgent Naga groups and the Indian

²⁹⁴ Ibid., p. 820.

²⁹⁵ Arkotong Longkumer (2018), 'Bible, Guns and Land: Sovereignty and Nationalism amongst the Nagas of India', *Nations and Nationalism*, 2018, p. 9. Accessed on 31st August, 2021.

²⁹⁶ Personal interview of Dr. Shurhozelie Liezietsu at his residence in Kohima, Nagaland on 7th December, 2021.

²⁹⁷ Ibid.,

government that led to the formation of Nagaland State under Article 371 (A) of the Indian Constitution, the question that arise is that of the political parties and the underground that signed the 16- Points agreement gave- up or compromised the Naga identity issue on which insurgency and independence was based on, Dr. Shurhozilie Liezietsu gave his comment that in 1960, the NPC appointed a body called 'negotiating body' among the leaders to negotiate with the Indian government and the underground Nagas, and to submit its report in one month. But a meeting was convened only after 6 months in Dimapur by the NPC, he further claimed that in this meeting without the consent of the underground, the NPC leaders announced already decided to sign an agreement with the Government of India, therefore, it cannot be claimed that Naga identity issue and sovereignty claimed by the Nagas through insurgency under the NNC was given up.²⁹⁸

The NSCN (IM) has demanded a separate constitution like the then state of Jammu and Kashmir, but the Center wants to expand the existing provisions of Article 371A. The main point of contention remains the form and content of the "special federal relationship" between India and Nagaland as the NSCN (IM). Under the proposed 'special relationship', India and Nagalim would mutually recognise each other's constitution.²⁹⁹

'A Framework Agreement' as it has been termed and has signed between the NSCN -IM and the Government of India on the 3rd August 2015 in the presence of the PM Narendra Modi. The Framework Agreement came after over 80 rounds of negotiations spanning 18 years.³⁰⁰ This shows the flexibility and realism of the NSCN-IM in its willingness to change its original goal of adopting a constitutional framework, albeit on the condition that the Naga-inhabited areas receive greater autonomy outside Nagaland through the creation of autonomous district councils.

²⁹⁸ Ibid.,

²⁹⁹ Gurinder Singh (2007), op. cit., p. 823.

³⁰⁰ N. K. Das (2018), 'Sovereignty and Cultural Discourse: Interrogating Indo- Naga 'Framework Agreement' in Relation to Naga Movement', *Explorations*, E- Journal of the Indian Sociological Society, Vol. 2 (2), October 2018, p. 40. Accessed on 31. 08. 2019

The negotiations between the NSCN-IM and the Centre had stopped following the former's refusal to hold deliberation with previous interlocutor RN Ravi (former Governor of Nagaland) after the 31st October, 2019 talks in Dimapur. There has been not much progress in the peace talks after the Centre in 2019 rejected the outfit's demand for separate flag and a constitution for the Nagas.³⁰¹ Talks between the Centre and the NSCN-IM resumed on the 20th September 2021, around 2 years after the deliberation stopped. The new interlocutor appointed by the Govt of India AK Mishra (former director of Intelligence Bureau) held talks with the NSCN-IM chief negotiator Th. Muivah at Dimapur in Nagaland. The interlocutor is yet to have meetings with Naga National Political Groups (NNPG). The Assam CM and Convenor of North East Democratic Alliance (NEDA) Himanta Biswa Sarma has met the outfit representatives in Dimapur on 21st September in the presence of the Chief Minister of Nagaland Neiphiu Rio, discussed about the ongoing Naga Peace talk.

Talking about the final peace settlement between the NSCN- IM and the Government of India that has been negotiated since, 2019, the president of the NPF claimed that the original party that was there right from the beginning i.e. the NNO (to whom the NPF claimed their origin) are still present in the state politics, and some underground factions (NSCN- IM) are having dialogue with the Indian government on the context that some Nagas want an early settlement, he believed that even if the settlement could be achieved in the near future, it will not be acceptable as the Nagas strongly believed that they are ethnically and culturally different from the Indians, since NNC, who started the ethnic movements are not the ones who negotiate the agreement, the believed that this will not be the final agreement.³⁰² This clearly indicates how much ethnic identity issue has impact upon the political culture and the existence of political parties in the state politics. Insurgency that has been catalysed of ethnic identity has still played an important role in the state politics even after 59 years of attainment of statehood.

³⁰¹ Ashok Kumar and Vipul Anekant 2022), *Challenges to Internal Security of India*, p. 48.

³⁰² Personal interview of Dr. Shurhozellie Liezietsu at his residence in Kohima, Nagaland on 7th December, 2021.

Dr. S.C Jamir, former Chief Minister of Nagaland and senior veteran Congress leader claimed that Naga politics and insurgency played on the ethnicity has led to confusion among the different groups, especially the clash of ideas and fighting for resources among the Nagas from Nagaland and Manipur³⁰³. The step-motherly treatment given by some section of the political and insurgent leaders from different states has led to confusion among the Nagas across the two states and that hastened the insurgent movements by some groups in the name of Naga nationalism based on ethnicity. He further claimed that the old insurgency movements in the 20th Century that has affected the socio- political, cultural and economic life of the Nagas need to be changed in the 21st century. The thoughts and approach of the politicians both overground and underground has to be rejuvenated in order to keep in tune with the contemporary political development.

Chingwang Konyak, a veteran Naga politician and the President of Nationalist Democratic Progressive Party (NDPP) has asserted his concern for minority tribal groups in the eastern part of Nagaland who are under the umbrella organization of Eastern Nagaland Peoples' Organization (ENPO),³⁰⁴ who are facing under development and backwardness in terms of education and economy has to be address in the recent political development and in the midst of political talks between the underground leaders and the government.³⁰⁵ On the issue of permanent peace settlement in Nagaland, the problems face by the Eastern Naga tribal groups cannot be ignored, and the demand of the ENPO for separate political unit (statehood) for the Eastern Naga ethnic groups will become louder that could create a problem in bringing permanent peace in the state. The demand and grievances of the tribals of

³⁰³ Personal Interview of Dr. S. C. Jamir, former Chief Minister of Nagaland and a veteran Congress leader at his residence in Dimapur, Nagaland on 9th December, 2021

³⁰⁴ ENPO stands for Eastern Nagaland Peoples' Organization consisting of six major Naga tribes namely Sangtam, Konyak, Yimchunger, Khiamniungam, Phom and Chang, and pre-dominantly settled in the districts of Mon, Tuensang, Kiphire, Longleng, Shamator and Noklak covering 20 of the state's 60 Assembly members, with its Headquarter at Tuensang, Nagaland. The organization main objective is to address the economic, social and educational backwardness of the Eastern Nagas and to bring justice to it.

³⁰⁵ Personal interview of Mr. Chingwang Konyak, a veteran Naga Politician, the present President of NDPP and an Advisor to the Chief Minister of Nagaland at his residence in Dimapur, Nagaland on 8th December, 2021.

the Eastern Nagas could delay the peace- building process that could further led to political violence in the state.

4.4.3 Role of the Church in Naga Insurgency

With the spread of Christianity among the Nagas, the issue of insurgency and Christianity identity goes along way. One of the objectives of Phizo's Naga National Council (NNC) was 'Nagaland for Christ'. When insurgency was intensified in the mid 1950's, leaders of Baptist Church stepped ahead to bring peace and normalcy, which were followed by the moderate Naga leaders started disassociate themselves with Phizo and his team. The negotiation under the initiative of the moderate Naga leaders, Church leaders, a separate new political unit 'Naga Hills Tuensang Area' was formed, this led to the formation of Naga Convention that paved way for the attainment of statehood in 1964.

A Ceasefire Agreement of 1964 between the underground Naga and the Indian Government was achieved under the initiative of the Church leaders that led to the establishment of Peace Mission³⁰⁶. Again, in 1975, Leader of the Baptist Church played an important role in signing the famous Shillong Accord. Nagaland Peace Council (NPC) that was formed in 1974 was submitted a memorandum to the Governor of Nagaland for restoring permanent peace in Nagaland under the chairmanship of Rev Longro Ao.³⁰⁷ This was followed by the beginning of talks from 10th November, 1974 that led to several rounds of talk in Shillong that led to the signing of 'Shillong Accord' on 5th December, 1975 in which the underground Naga representatives agreed to accept the provisions under the Constitution of India.

4.5 Conclusion

Insurgency became a tool of achieving political aspirations. It became a process of identity formation and political parties sown the seeds of ethno-

³⁰⁶ Kuohei Zhimomi (2004), op.cit. p. 81.

³⁰⁷ Ihezhe Zhimomi (2021), op.cit., p. 240

nationalism in Mizoram and Nagaland; later on, this ethno- nationalism converted into identity politics and the ultimate goal of ethnic nationalism and insurgency is statehood.

Chapter V: Electoral Performance of Political Parties in Mizoram and Nagaland

This chapter examines electoral performance of political parties in Mizoram and Nagaland. It includes a comprehensive and comparative study of National versus State parties. The previous chapter titled ‘Role of Insurgency in the Identity Politics’ ended with the role of insurgency in sharing the identity of the Mizos and the Nagas, and the new development of ethnic identity under the insurgency has led to political development in the two states. The present chapter explores the role of political parties in bring political stability and political development in the region. Analysis of the manifestos of political parties in the State Legislative Assembly Elections are included in the chapter.

5.1 Meaning of Election

Elections are essential for the functioning of democracies, where some form of representation is necessary so that all individual citizens can participate in the decision-making process of their society. The study of elections is therefore an important part of political science. Elections are a way to choose leaders or make a decision by voting. Ancient Athens had a system of elections in which all citizens could vote. Athenians did not settle disputes by brawling but, rather by discussion and debate.³⁰⁸ With the advent of modern democracy, elections have become a common method of choosing heads of parliaments and governments, and are a common practice in many public and private organizations. Elections are not limited to democracies; they were used in other, more authoritative forms of government. Rulers who are not accountable to the people may be elected by an elite group, such as feudal aristocracy or party leaders.

According to Dieter Nohlen, ‘Elections are the democratic method of choosing representatives of the people...Elections are a technique for forming

³⁰⁸ Brooke Moore (2011), *Philosophy: The Power of Ideas*, p.34.

representative bodies and/or for delegating authority...The notion of elections in its proper sense implies competitiveness as well as freedom of choice'.³⁰⁹ Elections mean the recruitment of representatives by voters' choice. This can be done in one of two ways. If voters choose a representative based on votes, it is a direct election.

T.R. Nanda defines election as '...the act of choosing a representative or the holder of a particular office, usually by ballot. Elections are of several kinds. In one the electors choose their representatives directly; in another they vote for persons who in turn choose the representatives. A general election occurs when all the representatives of a body are elected at once; a by-election is held to replace a representative who has resigned or died'.³¹⁰

The term electoral systems are referred to "a method which is used to translate the votes for candidates in an election into an allocation of seats or a decision as to who has won. There are three broad types of electoral system; the simple plurality system, proportional representation and majoritarian system".³¹¹

5.2 Electoral System in India

After India got her independence, the first general elections were held in 1952. India being one of the biggest democracies in the world, in terms of its electorate it is also the world's largest participatory political system based on universal adult franchise, which is effectively exercised at regular periodic elections at all levels of governance from grassroot local level elections to the state legislatures and the Parliament.³¹² Part XV: Article (324-328) of the Indian Constitution has provided constitutional provisions for elections and electoral machinery. Provision is made for reservation of seats for the Scheduled Castes and Scheduled Tribes to overcome their accumulated backwardness, on account of the historical neglect for

³⁰⁹ Dieter Nohlen (1996), *Election and Electoral System*, p. 14.

³¹⁰ T. R. Nanda (2000), *Dictionary of Political Science*, p. 179.

³¹¹ *Ibid.*, p. 181.

³¹² B. Hansheet Phom (2021), *A Reading on the Traditional and Modern Electoral System in Nagaland with Reference to Konyaks, Aos and Phoms*, p. 7.

centuries, and to secure for them an adequate representation, in order to help them to catch up with the developmental process.

To conduct of the elections in India, there is the Election Commission of India (ECI) under Article 324 of the Constitution consisting the Chief Election Commission, and a few other Election Commissioners, whose numbers are fixed from time to time by the President of India.³¹³ For every state, there is a Chief Electoral Officer nominated by the Election Commission to supervise the preparation, revision and correction of electoral rolls and to conduct all elections in the state. The Election Commission, in consultation with the State Government, appoints a Returning Officer for every parliamentary and assembly constituency and for every election to fill a seat in the Rajya Sabha. The Returning Officer is authorized to do all such acts and things as may be necessary for conducting the elections according to electoral laws.

India is a country of multi-ethnic, multicultural and multilingual communities with varied and diverse communal and socio-economic interests and perceptions. The importance and mission of the ECI was further strengthened to maintain a uniform and clearly defined electoral process in the country. Indian electoral politics is influenced by many factors like caste, money and muscle power, religion etc.

5.3 Elections in the North East India

Elections are a new phenomenon in Northeast India, especially in the hills of Northeast India. During the British rule, the hilly areas of Assam were administered in a limited way. The hilly areas of Assam were first declared as backward areas. Again, they were divided into Excluded and Partially Excluded Areas by the Government of India Act, 1935. The hill areas were not directly under the control of Assam Provincial Legislative Assembly. As a result, there were no provincial elections in the hill areas of Assam including the Lushai Hills. Therefore, the north-

³¹³ M Laxmikanth (2020), *Indian Polity*, p. 42.3.

eastern people, especially the hill tribes experienced democratic elections only after 1947.

The electoral politics in Mizoram and Nagaland is influenced by different civil society organizations operating in that area like the Churches, the YMA, the Nago Hohos, the students' organizations etc. They are very powerful and influential in state politics in general and electoral politics in particular. These civil societies are deeply involved in the day-to-day affairs of the two states and some of them become more active during elections.

5.4 Electoral performance of political parties in Mizoram

The growth of modern parliamentary form of administration in Mizoram was started in 1952 when Mizoram gained the status of District Council when the Lushai Hill District (Chiefship Abolition) Act, 1952 was passed by the Assam Legislative Assembly with effect from January 1, 1953³¹⁴. Mizoram attained the status of Union Territory in 1972 and Assam was bifurcated. The first session of Mizoram Legislative Assembly was held on 10 May 1972 which marks the beginning of Mizoram Legislative Assembly. The first Assembly of Mizoram had 30 elected seats and 3 nominated seats. The erstwhile District Council House was inherited for the Assembly House, since then the House of Mizoram Legislative Assembly has been the voice of the people where grievances of the people are vented.

The first Assembly election was won by the Mizo Union under the leadership of Pu Ch. Chhunga and was later merged with the Indian National Congress. Election to the second Assembly was held in 1978 in which People's Conference led by Brig.T. Sailo had won with absolute majority. However, the Ministry broke down after 5 months. The same party came into power in the next election and the incumbent Speaker Pu Thangridema was succeeded by Pu Kenneth Chawngliana. The fourth Assembly was constituted in 1984, the Indian National Congress under

³¹⁴ <https://www.mizoramassembly.in/page/history>. Accessed on 1st November, 2021.

the leadership of Pu Lal Thanhawla won the election. Pu H.Thansanga again assumed the office of the Speaker. However, with the implementation of Peace Accord between Mizo National Front (MNF) and Government of India, Pu Lal Thanhawla vacated Chief Ministership to make place for Pu Laldenga, President of MNF who became the Chief Minister for a period of 6 months.

5.4.1 1st General Election to the Legislative Assembly of Mizoram 1987:

Elections to the Mizoram Legislative Assembly were held in February 1987 to elect members of the 40 constituencies. Although designated as independents, the MNF won the majority of seats and the leader of the party Laldenga became the Chief Minister. One of the conditions of the Mizo Peace Accord 1986 was the conversion of Mizoram from a Union Territory to a state. This was achieved through the State of Mizoram Act, 1986 by which, the seats in the Legislative Assembly were increased from thirty to forty. The MNF securing 24 seats with 43.31% votes pulled, the INC with 13 seats with 32.99 % votes pulled, and the PC Party with 3 seats with 23.70 % votes pulled.³¹⁵ The voting turnout was 74.80%.

5.4.2 2nd General Election to the Legislative Assembly of Mizoram 1989:

The MNF Ministry of 1987 could not complete its 5 years term due to internal faction inside the Ministry. 8 MLAs walked out from the party and decided to form a new party, and formed coalition named United Legislature Party with the Congress- I who had 13 MLAs. This had put Mizoram under the President's Rule as per the provisions under Article 356 of the Indian Constitution on 7th September, 1988 and fresh election was held on 21st January, 1989³¹⁶. As seven political parties contested the elections, the Indian National Congress (INC) won the election by securing 23 seats with 34.85% votes pulled, the MNF securing 14 seats with 35.29%

³¹⁵ <https://eci.gov.in/files/file/3659-mizoram-1987/>, "Statistical Reports on General Election, 1987, to the Legislative Assembly of Mizoram", retrieved from the Election Commission of India, Retrieved on 31st August, 2021., p. 5

³¹⁶ C. Hermana (1999), 'Zoram Politics Thlitleh Dan- vol. II', p 110.

votes pulled, PC Party securing only 1 seat with 19.67 votes pulled, and the independent candidates securing 2 seats with 10.19% votes pulled. The voting turnout was 81.30%.³¹⁷ It is clear from the election results that the MNF who recently joined over ground politics, after being declared as unlawful organization for 20 years were voted into power in 1986 with great enthusiasm by the people. But the internal faction within the ministry proved to be too costly that the masses lost their trust to the MNF party.

5.4.3 3rd General Election to the Legislative Assembly of Mizoram 1993:

Elections to the Third Legislative Assembly of Mizoram was held on 30th November, 1993. Prior to the election, the People's Conference party in order to strengthen the party structure and to make the party relevant in the national politics, converted itself into 'Mizoram Janata Dal (MJD)'. The party decided to join the national party in order to revive the strength of the party³¹⁸ after repeatedly loss the elections of the State Legislative Assembly for consecutively three times. In this election, none of the political parties were sure of winning the election, that led to an alliance formation between the Congress- I and the MJD. Another interesting political dynamic was the role of the church in the electoral politics; 14 Church leaders and elders contested the elections of 1993 and 5 were voted for power from different political parties and as an independent candidate.³¹⁹ The BJP for the first time, contested the elections of Mizoram but did not win any seat. Pu Lal Thanhawla became the Chief Minister as the Congress- I secured 16 seats with 33.10 % votes pulled, its pre- poll alliance the MJD (as independent) securing 10 seats with 23.38% votes pulled, and the MNF securing 14 seats with 40.41% votes pulled. The voting turnout was 80.75 %.³²⁰

³¹⁷ Ibid., p. 110.

³¹⁸ Personal interview of Prof. J. V. Hluna, an academician and Ex- MLA of PC Party, at his residence in Mission Veng, Aizawl on 7th December, 2022.

³¹⁹ C. Hermana (1999), op. cit, p 121.

³²⁰ Ibid., p. 122.

5.4.4 4th General Election to the Legislative Assembly of Mizoram 1998:

Elections to Mizoram Legislative Assembly was held in November, 1998 with the voting turnout of 76.32%. The two regional parties namely the MNF and the Mizoram People's Conference Party (MPC)³²¹ joined hands together and won majority by securing 33 seats in the Assembly, The MNF with 21 seats having 24.99 % votes pulled, the MPC winning 12 seats with 20.44% votes pulled. The INC secured 6 seats with 29.77% votes pulled, and independent candidate with one seat.³²² The overall voting turnout was 76.32%. The leader of the MNF party Pu Zoramthanga became the Chief Minister of the state.

5.4.5 5th General Election to the Legislative Assembly of Mizoram 2003:

Elections to the Mizoram Legislative Assembly took place in November, 2003. The main competition was between the MNF and the Congress Party. On the third front, a pre- poll alliance was formed between the Mizoram People's Conference (MPC) and the factional group of the MNF, Zoram Nationalist Party (ZNP). The MNF and the Congress contested the elections without any alliance. For the consecutive term, the MNF came out with single majority securing 22 seats with 31.69% votes pulled. the Congress- I getting 12 seats with 30.06%; and the coalition between two regional parties could not come out as expected by securing only 6 seats out of 40. The overall voting turnout was 78.65%.

5.4.6 6th General Election to the Legislative Assembly of Mizoram 2008:

The State Legislative Assembly election was held on November, 2008. The Congress party won majority by getting 32 seats with 40.03% votes pulled, the MNF could secure only 3 seats with 31.54% votes pulled, the MPC secured 2 seats with 7.92% votes pulled, ZNP secured 2 seats with 10.52% votes pulled, and Mara

³²¹ The prior MJD again changed back its name to Mizoram People's Conference Party on 23rd march, 1993; cutting off all its ties from Janata Dal. See Kenneth Chawngliana (2002), op.cit., p. 197.

³²² C. Hermana (1999), op. cit, p 122.

Democratic Front with 1 seat. The MNF, who was forming government for ten years, was voted out of power. The overall voting turnout was 82.35%.

5.4.7 The Seventh State Legislative Assembly Elections of 2013:

The seventh State Legislative Assembly election was held on 25th November, 2013 and results were declared on 9th December. The main contest was between the Congress- I and the MNF led Mizo Democratic Alliance which comprises of the MNF, the MPC and the MDF. The Congress won majority by securing 34 seats with 40.03% votes pulled, the MNF secured 5 seats with 31.54% votes pulled, and the MPC won 1 seat with . The ZNP failed to secure any seat. The overall voting turnout was 82.35%.

5.4.8 The Eighth State Legislative Assembly Elections of 2018

The Eighth State Legislative Assembly Election was held on 28th November 2018. The BJP, the Congress, the Mizo National Front (MNF), National People's Party (NPP), Nationalist Congress Party (NCP), People's Representative for Identity and Status in Mizoram (PRISM), Zoram Peoples Movement (Independent), Zoram Thar and some independent candidates contested the election. There are 40 seats with 209 candidates out of which 191 are males and 12 are females.³²³ The verdict of the result was that MNF has swept majority by securing 26 seats with 37.7 % votes pulled, the ruling Congress party managed to get only 5 seats with 29.98% votes pulled, newly formed ZPM group secured 8 seats with 22.9% votes pulled and for the first time, nationalist party i.e., the BJP managed to mark its entry into Mizoram politics by securing one seat with 8.09% votes pulled. The overall voting turnout was 81.61%.

5.5 Electoral performance of political parties in Nagaland

³²³ "Mizoram a Assembly Inthlan Chanchin" *The Frontier Despatch*, (10 December 2018).

Nagaland became a state on the 1st December 1963 by merging the then Division of North East Frontier Agency with the District of Naga Hills under Assam which came to be known as Naga Hills Tuensang Area (NHTA). The first democratically elected ministry under Sri. P. Shilu Ao came into being in 1964³²⁴. The first assembly election was held in 1964, since then thirteen General Elections for Nagaland State Assembly are held.

5.5.1 1st General Election to the Legislative Assembly of Nagaland 1964

First election to the 40 members of the Nagaland Legislative Assembly was held in January, 1964. Two regional parties namely Nationalist Party and Democratic Party contested the elections; the Nationalist Party under won the elections by getting 25 seats out of which 13 were elected as uncontested. In the meantime, the Democratic Party secured 12 seats out of which one elected as uncontested³²⁵, the total votes polled was 78.38%. P. Shilu Ao became the Chief Minister of Nagaland.

5.5.2 2nd General Election to the Legislative Assembly of Nagaland 1969:

Elections were held in February 1969 where two political parties contested the elections- the NNO and the United Front of Nagaland (UFN). The NNO won the election winning 22 seats, the UFN with 10 seats and 8 seats went to the independent candidates.³²⁶ The total votes polled was 78.37%. Hokishe Sema became the Chief Minister of Nagaland.

5.5.3 3rd General Election to the Legislative Assembly of Nagaland 1974:

In February 1974, elections to the 60 Members of Nagaland Legislative Assembly were held. Following the recommendations of the Delimitation

³²⁴ B. Hansheet Phom (2021), op.cit., p. 10.

³²⁵ Dr. V. Hokutu Jimomi ((2009), *Political Parties in Nagaland*, p. 336.

³²⁶ Ibid., p. 337.

Commission of India³²⁷, number of constituencies in Nagaland were increased from 40 to 60 after the 1969 elections. Prior to the election, the UFN changed its name to the United Democratic Front (UDF). The result of the election was UDF securing 25 seats, NNO with 23 seats and Independent with 12 seats. With the support of the independent MLAs, Mr. Vizol Angami from UDF became the Chief Minister.³²⁸ The total votes polled was 74.35%.

5.5.4 4th General Election to the Legislative Assembly of Nagaland 1977

Elections to the 4th Legislative Assembly of Nagaland was held in November, 1977. This was the first election in Nagaland after the Shillong Accord of 1975. The UDF under the leadership of Vizol Angami won the election securing 35 seats, the second government of the UDF was installed. The Congress Party securing 15 seats, the National Convention of Nagaland (NCN) with one seat, and Independent with 9 seats.³²⁹

5.5.5 5th General Election to the Legislative Assembly of Nagaland 1982

Before, the general election, the UDF on its 9th General Assembly on 3rd December, 1981 amended the constitution of the Party and changed the party name into Nagaland National Democratic Party (NNDP).³³⁰ Elections were held in November, 1982, the result was NNDP with 24 seats, the Congress (I) with 24 seats, Nagaland UDF with 1 seat, and Independents with 11 seats.³³¹ Congress under the leadership of S. C. Jamir formed the government with the support from Independents.

³²⁷ The Delimitation commission or Boundary commission of India is a commission established by the Government of India under the provisions of the Delimitation Commission Act. The main task of the commission is redrawing the boundaries of the various Assembly and Lok Sabha constituencies based on a recent census. The representation from each State is not changed during this exercise. However, the number of Scheduled Caste and Scheduled Tribe seats in a state are changed in accordance with the census.

³²⁸ Dr. V. Hokutu Jimomi ((2009), op.cit., p. 14.

³²⁹ Ibid., p. 15.

³³⁰ Ibid., p. 16.

³³¹ Ibid., p. 16.

5.5.6 6th General Election to the Legislative Assembly of Nagaland 1987

The elections to the Nagaland Legislative Assembly were held in November, 1987. And in this election, the Indian National Congress for the first time won absolute majority claiming 34 seats. NNDP winning 18 seats, Nagaland's People Front with one seat, Independent with 7 seats.³³² But on 30th June, 1988, thirteen of the Congress legislators broke away from Congress (I) and formed a new party under the name 'Congress (Regional) Party' with Mr. K. L. Chishi as its President, this led to the formation of a coalition government with the name of 'Joint Regional Legislature Party' (JRLP) by the NNDP with the Congress Regional Party³³³, but this coalition did not last long as the legislators who claimed from the Congress Regional Party were disqualified by the Speaker of the House under the Tenth Schedule of the Constitution; led to the imposition of the President's Rule in Nagaland with effect from 7th August, 1988.

5.5.7 7th General Election to the Legislative Assembly of Nagaland 1989:

Prior to the election of 1989, the NNDP in its 6th General Session held on 21st September, 1988 at Dimapur, changed the name of the party to Nagaland People's Council (NPC), later on had its approval from the Election Commission of India. The Indian National Congress with its leader S. C. Jamir won the election with 36 seats, NPC with 24 seats, Nagaland Peoples Party (NPP) unrecognised registered party and independent candidates did not win any seat.³³⁴

5.5.8 8th General Election to the Legislative Assembly of Nagaland 1993:

Elections to the State Assembly was held in February 1993. The Indian National Congress with its leader S. C. Jamir won the election with 35 seats for the

³³² Statistical Report on the General Election, 1987 to the Legislative Assembly of Nagaland, retrieved from the Election Commission of India, Retrieved on 18th August, 2021.

³³³ Dr. V. Hokutu Jimomi ((2009), op.cit., p. 17.

³³⁴ <https://www.elections.in/nagaland/assembly-constituencies/1989-election-results.html>, retrieved from the Election Commission of India, Retrieved on 18th August, 2021.

third time, NPC with 17 seats, Democratic Labour Party with 1 seat, independents with 7 seats and BPJ failing to secure any seat.³³⁵

5.5.9 9th General Election to the Legislative Assembly of Nagaland 1998:

Elections to the State Assembly was held on the 23rd February 1998. Prior to the elections, a ceasefire agreement was signed between the Indian Government and the NSCN- IM in 1997. The NSCN- IM and the Naga Hoho demanded that elections to the state legislative assembly to be postponed till the conclusion of the peace talks and decided to boycott the elections even issuing threats to the various political parties where necessary since the Election Commission could not agree to their demands. Re- Polling was done in 11 polling stations on the 25th March, 1998. Accordingly, three political parties namely, the BJP, the NPC and the NDM did not participate in the elections³³⁶. The Indian National Congress contested in all the seats winning 53 seats with S.C Jamir as its Chief Minister, and independent winning 6 seats. The Congress won 43 seats uncontested.³³⁷

5.5.10 10th General Election to the Legislative Assembly of Nagaland 2003:

Elections to the State Assembly were held on the 28th February and 3rd March 2003, due to booth capturing, EVMs damaged in mob violence.³³⁸ The Naga People's Front (NPF), the BJP, The Janata Dal (United) and the Samata Party formed the Democratic Alliance of Nagaland won a majority of seats by securing 30 seats. The INC securing 21 seats, Nationalist Democratic Movement with 5 seats, and

³³⁵ https://ceo.nagaland.gov.in/ElectionFiles/NLA/8th_General_Election_Report_NLA_1993.pdf, Retrieved on 18th August, 2021.

³³⁶ https://ceo.nagaland.gov.in/ElectionFiles/LS/12th_General_Election_Report_LS_1998.pdf, p. 9. Retrieved on 18th August, 2022.

³³⁷ Ibid., p. 9.

³³⁸ https://ceo.nagaland.gov.in/ElectionFiles/NLA/10th_General_Election_Report_NLA_2003.pdf, "Reports on the General Elections to the 10th Legislative Assembly, 2003", p. 9. Published by Chief Electoral Officer, Nagaland. Retrieved on 18th August, 2022.

Independents securing 4 seats³³⁹. Neiphiu Rio, who previously served as the Home Minister under S.C. Jamir's led Congress government became the Chief Minister.

5.5.11 11th General Election to the Legislative Assembly of Nagaland 2008:

The General Election to the 11th State Legislative Assembly was held on 5th March, 2008. 289 Candidates filed their nominations, out of which 63 nominations were rejected and 8 were withdrawn leaving 218 Candidates in the fray for 60 (sixty) Assembly Constituency Seats in the State. Re-poll was ordered in 51 Polling Stations under 22 Assembly Constituencies due to damage to EVMs, mob violence, snatching of EVMs by miscreants, booth capturing and irregularities in voting.³⁴⁰ The NPF securing 26 seats formed the government with Neiphiu Rio as the Chief Minister for the second term. The Indian National Congress securing 23 seats, BJP with 2 seats, Nationalist Congress Party with 2 seats, and Independents securing 7 seats.³⁴¹

5.5.12 12th General Election to the Legislative Assembly of Nagaland 2013:

The General Election to the 12th Nagaland State Legislative Assembly poll was taken on 23rd February, 2013. Three national parties i.e the BJP, the Congress-I and the NCP, three state parties namely the NPF, the JD(U) and the Rashtriya Janata Dal (RJD), one registered unrecognised party United Naga Democratic Party and 39 independent candidates contested the elections. The NPF under the leadership of Neiphiu Rio won the elections by securing 38 seats, INC with 8 seats, BJP 1, NCP with 4, JD(U) 1 seat, and Independents securing 8 seats.³⁴²

³³⁹ Ibid., p. 9

³⁴⁰ https://ceo.nagaland.gov.in/ElectionFiles/NLA/11th_General_Election_Report_NLA_2008.pdf, "Reports on the General Election to the 11th Legislative Assembly 2008", p. 13. Published by Chief Electoral Officer, Nagaland. Retrieved on 18th August, 2022.

³⁴¹ Ibid., p. 15.

³⁴² https://ceo.nagaland.gov.in/ElectionFiles/NLA/12th_General_Election_Report_NLA_2013.pdf, "Reports on the General Election to the 12th Legislative Assembly 2013", p. 47. Published by Chief Electoral Officer, Nagaland. Retrieved on 18th August, 2022.

5.5.13 13th General Election to the Legislative Assembly of Nagaland 2018:

The General Election to the 13th Nagaland Legislative Assembly 2018 was taken on 27th of February 2018 in 59 out of 60 constituencies of the Legislative Assembly of Nagaland. One assembly constituency, 11th Northern Angami -II was not required to go for polls as the candidate (Neiphiu Rio) in that constituency got elected unopposed. On 22 Jan 2018, former Chief Minister K. L Chishi from the Congress Party joined the BJP along with 12 other leaders. The BJP-led National Democratic Alliance and the ruling Naga Peoples' Front dissolved their electoral alliance prior to the election. The BJP instead chose to form an alliance with the newly formed NDPP, led by former CM Neiphiu Rio. 9 registered political parties and 11 independent candidates contested the election. The NPF secured 26 seats, NDPP with 18 seats, BJP with 12 seats, NPP secured 2 seats, JD(U) 1 and Independent 1 seats. For the first time, the Congress party failed to secured any seats.³⁴³ A coalition government known as 'Democratic Alliance of Nagaland' by the BJP, NDPP and the NPF, leader of the NDPP Neiphiu Rio is the present Chief Minister of Nagaland.

5.6 Election manifesto

Election manifesto is a published document by a political party containing the programmes, ideology, views, policies and programmes keeping an eye on the upcoming elections to achieve the winning of the elections. It is usually published and drafted by political parties usually before general elections, which is well manifested and widely published. It serves as a benchmark for the voters for what the political party stands for, so that the electors could decide which party to vote for to meet their expectations and objectives. The performance of a political party who forms the government is usually measured as per their election manifestos.

³⁴³ https://ceo.nagaland.gov.in/ElectionFiles/NLA/13th_General_Election_Report_NLA_2018.pdf, *Reports on the General Election to the 13th Legislative Assembly 2018*, p. 73. Published by Chief Electoral Officer, Nagaland. Retrieved on 18th August, 2022.

5.7 Election Manifestos of Political Parties in Mizoram:

5.7.1 The 1987 State Legislative Assembly Elections-

The Congress Party in its 1987 State Legislative Assembly Election manifesto expressed the objective of economic self- sufficiency, control of jhumming, adoption of high- yield variety, construction of rural godown and cold storage, provision of marketing facilities and the promotion of rural industries³⁴⁴. In terms of infrastructure development, the aforementioned manifesto proposed plans to build railway and airport connectivity from Mizoram to the rest of the province, build more hospitals, expand educational libraries and sports facilities, etc. The Congress party boldly claimed to eliminate all corrupt practices from the machinery of state administration.

In the preamble of its manifesto, the Mizo National Front (MNF) promised to implement all the terms of the MoU and ensure lasting peace in Mizoram as a "model state" by bringing all-round development to the country. The main points of the manifestos are³⁴⁵ - to introduce large scale cash- crops with proper marketing facilities; improvement in electricity and develop and expand tele- communication link to the remotest part of the state; to develop roads connecting all towns and villages, adequate water supply to all.

The People's Conference Party promised voters to eradicate nepotism and all forms of corruption. Regarding social reforms, it would need the opinions and advice of church leaders and voluntary organizations. Their main promise was to finish the works they could not complete during their in the government according to 'Six Basic Needs' and top priority was given to the infra- structure development especially development in Hydro- Electricity.³⁴⁶

³⁴⁴ KM Zakhuma (2001), *Political Developments in Mizoram from 1946- 1989*, p. 296.

³⁴⁵ Election Manifesto 1987 published by the MNF Headquarters, Aizawl.

³⁴⁶ Election Manifesto 1987 published by the People's Conference headquarters, Aizawl.

5.7.2 The 1989 State Legislative Assembly Elections-

The 1989 State Legislative Elections took place on 21st January, 1989 because of the split in MNF party, eight MLAs defected to the Congress Party in September, 1988 and President's Rule was imposed in the state. Seven political parties contested in this election and the Congress won the 2nd Legislative Assembly elections by securing 22 seats, the MNF with 14 seats and the MNF (D) with 2 seats.³⁴⁷

From the election manifestos, it is clear that different political parties approached and promised the voters almost the same, all tried to promise as best as possible without realistic aspects. It should be noted that the political parties were mostly based on the interests of the congregations, because the manifestos did not reflect the awareness of national programs or the goals of socio-economic changes. Both the national and state parties' laid emphasis on regional grievances and problems only. An important federal relation between the Centre and the state regarding financial relations was the implementation of the New Land Use Policy (NLUP). Under this scheme, with the approval of the Planning Commission, 50,000 families were to receive Rs. 3000 per year for five years for the development of agriculture, veterinary and animal husbandry, forest and small and cottage industries.³⁴⁸ Political parties that contested the 1989 elections adopted all sorts of campaigning tactics and methods like street procession,

5.7.3 The 1993 State Legislative Assembly Elections-

Not many changes were visible in all the parties' manifestos. The political parties based their promises on regional demands only. The Congress like the previous election on its economic front gave importance to rural economy by promoting NLUP policy. The MJD mainly highlighted the plans to improve and

³⁴⁷ KM Zakhuma (2001), op.cit. p. 247.

³⁴⁸ Kenneth Chawngliana (2002), op.cit., p. 203.

developed hydel- electric power. The MNF too made similar pledge in social, economic and political all- round development of the state.³⁴⁹

A study of election manifestos shows that no party has emphasized the need for progressive action to bring about socio-economic change in Mizoram. It is quite clear that the manifestos were drawn up according to local tastes and interests. At best, some parties committed to achieving self-sufficiency in agriculture by the deadline without announcing a political package. This clearly shows that political parties sought their programs from abstract idealism to concrete items of socio-economic changes.

5.7.4 The 1998 State Legislative Assembly Elections-

The MNF-MPC manifesto was divided into fourteen main points, which mainly consist of promises in the fields of political, economic, administrative and social development. Better transport options by road, rail and air; Review of Mizoram Industrial Policy; creating a better education policy. Emphasis was placed on the development of hydropower projects; investments by foreign companies in more projects and they will be completed as soon as possible. The coalition also talked about ending poverty by giving financial aid to people living below the poverty line; improving sports infrastructure and providing financial support in various sports venues. They also pledge to protect and empower women's status in the state and promised to revise the existing Mizo Customary Laws.³⁵⁰ The Congress party, like the previous election gave utmost importance to NLUP policy; this lack of changes in the party policy led to the downfall of the party in 1998 elections.

One major step forward during the MNF-MPC ministry was the coalition's support for the National Democratic Alliance (NDA) government at the Center in the 1999 Lok Sabha elections. As promised in the 1986 MoU, Mizoram achieved its own

³⁴⁹ KM Zakhuma, op.cit., p. 250.

³⁵⁰ Joint Election Manifesto 1998 published by the MNF- MPC Headquarters, Aizawl.

university by Act of Parliament in 2000 and it came into existence in 2001. Efforts were made by the coalition ministry in settlement of the ex- undergrounds in getting grants and aids. Notable achievement gained by this coalition government was received of 'Peace Bonus' scheme from the NDA government.³⁵¹ This scheme, which came from the Central government, was used for development works in various areas, mostly for rural development and construction of roadways.

5.7.5 The 2003 State Legislative Assembly Elections

The congress party fought elections based on national issues, while emphasizing regional needs and demands, with special emphasis on the development of power and road districts. The party promised to review the NLUP policy and implement it properly so that the funds are used in the right way. On the issue of youth welfare, the party promised to set up a youth committee to promote youth interest in various fields. Education system of the state would be revised and implemented with the introduction of information technology to all educational institutions. In terms of local government, the party promised to establish district development councils in all eight districts and to establish a Municipal council/Corporation. Importance would be given to rural development in all round activities so that the gap between the rural and urban areas could be minimized.³⁵²

The MNF party based its policies and programs on regional demands; At the same time, raising the status of the state was important in all areas of economy, politics and society. The party promised to implement 'Right to Information Act' for the transparency and accountability of the government towards the people. The focus was on rural development, providing better road services and a proper communication system. The party promised farmers that the government would buy their agricultural produce at a higher price and would better direct the distribution of

³⁵¹ C. Hermana (1999), 'Zoram Politics Thli Tleh Dan Vol- II', Aizawl, p. 147.

³⁵² Election Manifesto of 2003, issued by Mizoram Pradesh Congress Committee, Aizawl.

the harvest. Regarding the education system, it pledged for better infra-structures and necessary facilities to all educational institutions starting from primary schools to university.³⁵³

The MPC and ZNP made a pre-poll alliance and their Common Programme issued by both the parties was mainly based on regional demands, where importance had been given to develop hydel- electric power and forming transparency government so that it would include masses from urban as well as rural areas to meet the needs and demands of all equally³⁵⁴. There wasn't much difference between the programmes and policies by different political parties.

5.7.6 The 2008 State Legislative Assembly Elections

The Congress Party, under the theme 'Good Governance' promised de-centralization of administration; starting of separate Women and Child Welfare Department for protection and promotion of their welfare. In educational aspects, the party promised quality education by starting Education Reforms Commission. On the issue of health care, the party pledged to have its own medical college and better health care facilities even for the rural areas. The party in its manifesto focuses on the welfare of the youth at length. Regarding development of infrastructure, the Congress enhanced development in areas of power, roads, railways, waterways and airways; creating meaningful Infrastructure Development Authority; to explore the on- going Oil and Gas exploration in a larger and more focused perspective. The main economic development issue lies in NLUP; where it promised to deliver rupees one lakh to the chosen family in order to eliminate jhum cultivation.³⁵⁵ There programmes and policies attract the voters in great number.

³⁵³ Election Manifesto of 2003, published by Mizo National Front General Headquarter, Aizawl.

³⁵⁴ Common Programme 2003, issued by MPC and ZNP Co- ordination Committee, Aizawl.

³⁵⁵ Election Manifesto of 2008, issued by Mizoram Pradesh Congress Committee, Aizawl.

The manifestos of the state parties such as the MNF, the PC Party and the ZNP were more or less the same, hardly any changes were found; highlighting the same developmental issues which they tackled in their earlier manifestos.

5.7.7 The 2013 State Legislative Assembly Elections

The 'Common Manifesto' issued by Mizo Democratic Alliance³⁵⁶ highlighted the protection of Mizo language and its inclusion in the 8th Schedule of the Indian Constitution; decentralization of power for good governance; Socio- Economic Development Programme (SEDP) and fulfilment of Six Basix Needs; promotion of quality education which focus IT subject; better Health Care Scheme especially for the BPL families; better policy for the Youth in enhancement of skill based trainings; starting of Lok Ayukta/ Vigilance Commission to end corruption in the state; better transport facility in air, water, road and railway transport with additional airport construction in the southern part of Mizoram. Lastly, the party highlighted the plan to improve and developed hydel- electric powers such as Chhimtuipui Hydel Project- 635 MW, Tuirial Hydel Project- 60 MW, Bairabi Hydel Project- 120 MW and Tuivai Hydel Project- 210 MW.³⁵⁷

The main issue of the Congress was its flagship programme of NLUP and its continuation in order to eradicate poverty and jhum cultivation in the state. Utmost importance was given to the welfare of the youth in areas of employment, education, skill- based training and in areas of sports and recreation; the party pledged to build proper sport stadium in each district headquarters. On health issue, like the previous manifesto, the Congress pledged to fulfil its own medical college. Power development remained one of the core issues which the party promised to give power supply to all the villages in Mizoram within five years. Issue of tourism was another important development one finds in the policy of the party; introduction of ropeways, strengthening all the bridges across the state; promotion of eco- tourism; attraction of

³⁵⁶ the MNF led Mizo Democratic Alliance, a pre-poll alliance which comprises of the MNF, the MPC and the MDF.

³⁵⁷ Common Manifesto 2013, jointly published by MNF, MPC and MDF General Headquarters, Aizawl.

tourists in adventure and motor sports were found in the programme. Strengthening furniture industries based on bamboos and creation of Women and Child Department separately in taking care of the needs of these groups.³⁵⁸

The ZNP Party fought the election with the economic policy of FOSEP- Family Oriented Sustainable Economic Policy, which focus on inclusive growth and stable economic policy. On the issue of youth welfare, its policy of YES- Youth Empowerment Scheme based on National Youth Policy and skills development, creation of job counselling centres and capacities building programmes, entrepreneurship courses, introduction of vocational schools etc were mentioned extensively. Regarding the industrial policy, the party programme included maximum foreign investments, privatization, better industrial estates, better loan facilities, improvement in handloom and handicraft industries. On social issues, the protection of customary law under Article 371G of the Indian Constitution, creation of community healing centres in every district, to establish better relationship with the Church and the NGOs in eradication of substance abuse and HIV/AIDS. The party also highlighted the importance of proper financial management like grass root level planning, socio- economic census, decentralization in planning, viability gap funding and austerity measures. Lastly, the party's administrative policy of SMART GOVERNANCE- Simple, Mature, Accountable, Responsible and Transparent Governance³⁵⁹ are worth mentioning.

5.7.8 The 2018 State Legislative Assembly Elections-

The main theme of the MNF's economic policy was in the form of Socio-Economic Development Policy (SEDP)³⁶⁰ in which cash distribution of rupees 3 lakhs will be given to those economically lower section families to boost their economy in the field of agriculture, sericulture, animal husbandry, handloom &

³⁵⁸ Election Manifesto 2013, published by Mizoram Pradesh Congress Committee, Aizawl.

³⁵⁹ ZNP Policy: Kalphung Thar 2013, published by ZNP General Headquarters, Aizawl.

³⁶⁰ Mizo National Front, "Election Manifesto 2018", p.3.

handicraft, carpentry and petty trading. Hardly changes in the economic policy was seen from the previous election manifestos from the MNF party.

The Congress Party just stressed on New Land Use Policy (NLUP) alone as its economic policy, saying there will be continuation of distribution of NLUP and guidelines of the policy would be revised³⁶¹.

The BJP did not clearly mention the economic policy alone but the promise of Agricultural Land Reform, promoting private set-up industries by providing loans.

PRISM party stressed on taking advantage of ‘Look West Policy’ by setting up Tlabung Border Trade Centre so that maximum economic benefits could be gained by India. ‘Regulated Market System’ would be introduced to solve the problem of selling the agricultural products by the farmers. To fulfil and implement UNO’s 2030 target of 17 Sustainable Development Goals for removal of poverty and self-sufficiency in food consumptions.³⁶²

ZPM has framed its economic policy based on ‘six basic needs’ introduced by Brig. T. Sailo, the then president of PC Party. Introduction of ‘hand-holding policy’ meaning responsibility lies on the government in guiding the people. Unlike the Congress and the MNF, the ZPM did not promise the voters any cash-distribution policy but promised the cultivators to help out in terms of distribution of harvested goods. Proper implementation of industrial policy was laid out in the party manifesto and the party promised to help ‘anybody who can do it’ for their economic sustenance.³⁶³

³⁶¹ Mizoram Pradesh Congress Committee, “Election Manifesto: 2018 MLA General Election”, p. 2.

³⁶² PRISM, “MLA Election Manifesto, 2018”, p.7.

³⁶³ Zoram People’s Movement (ZPM), “Tobul, Ruangam leh Hlenchhuah a Tumte”, p.17.

By analyzing the policies and programs of the political parties, it can be concluded that no political party is committed to achieving its socio-economic development goals; voters do not care about the promises of political parties and are not aware. It can be seen that the politics of the NLUP Congress Party and the peace bonus prize of the MNF and SEDP are the only "selling policies" to the voters. Regional imbalances and development between urban and rural areas are very relevant in the political process. It is clear that none of the parties have made the necessary structural changes in the economic system to justify the election bid. At best, some party commits to self-sufficiency in agriculture at a given time without mentioning the political package. There is not much difference in terms of ideology between national and regional political parties.

One could argue that in most of the cases, election manifestos are just drafted and printed for the sake of making it. Political parties must recover their programs from abstract idealism specific socio-economic changes in the development of the state.

5.8 Election Manifestos of Political Parties in Nagaland

5.8.1 The United Front of Nagaland-

The UFN participated in the 2nd General elections of 1969 with the following aims and objectives-

- The aim of bring permanent peace through political negotiations.
- Clean and efficient administration.
- To remove economic disparities.
- Steps will be taken to prevent infiltrations from illegal immigrants to protect the culture and social life of the Nagas.

- Top priorities to be given to agriculture in the field of development³⁶⁴.

5.8.2 Naga National Organization (NNO):

5.8.2.1 The Election Manifesto of 1969 General Assembly Elections-

- The election manifestos highlighted the party's stand towards
- In the political field, the NNO pledge to continuously strive for the unity of the Naga tribes, and for permanent peace- settlement. The party claimed its support towards permanent peace that included the involvement of the state government.

5.8.2.2 The Election Manifesto of 1974 General Assembly Elections-

- The NNO claimed that it stood by the Agreement of 1960 with the Government of India to solve the Naga issue.
- The party claimed that it had successfully convinced around 9000 undergrounds to become overground and further pledged the rehabilitation with same degree of honour and dignity³⁶⁵.
- Regarding the ethnic politics and issues, the NNO in this election Manifesto reassured its stand for the integration of all the Nagas under one administrative unit of Nagaland and NNO would work for the fair and justified demarcation of the state boundaries with Assam as well as its international boundary with Myanmar.³⁶⁶
- Importance and focus should be given to Tuensang district and special attention in should be given in formulation policies in view of the requirement of the district in economic, social and educational plans.
- The NNO desires for the social and political integration of the minor tribes and small ethnic groups for their welfare. The NNO would continue to work

³⁶⁴ Dr. V. Hokutu Jimomi ((2009), op.cit., p. 24.

³⁶⁵ Ibid., p. 53.

³⁶⁶ Ibid., p. 54.

to strive to protect and safeguard the interests of the ethnic minorities within the state.³⁶⁷

5.8.3 The United Democratic Front (UDF)

5.8.3.1 The Election Manifesto of the 1977 State Legislative Assembly Elections

- In the line of political issues, the UDF pledged to find a solution of the on-going Naga problems in the line of ‘reconciliation’ and to work for the integration of all the Naga inhabited areas.
- The party pledged to strengthen Naga traditional institutions and cultural heritage
- To bring electoral reforms for clean and efficient administration.
- To initiate man- power planning and draw up time-bound development schemes for generation of more employments
- To develop road communication that links all towns and villages.
- To improve health services in rural areas, and to hasten rural electrification and water supply programmes.³⁶⁸

5.8.4 Naga People’s Front (NPF)

5.8.4.1 The Election Manifesto of 2003-

- The NPF pledged for a peaceful solution to Naga problem through political settlement with full co-operation and support. The party acknowledged the contributions made by civil societies such as Naga Hohos, Churches and NGOS towards peace and reconciliation for a united Naga family. And it pledged to continue to stand for the integration of all Naga inhabited areas under one administrative unit.³⁶⁹
- Transparency in decision making and in administration of government.

³⁶⁷ Ibid., p. 60.

³⁶⁸ The United Democratic Front, “UDF Election Manifesto 1977”.

³⁶⁹ Election Manifesto, Nagaland People’s Front 2003.

- The Party assured appropriate assistance to immediate members of the family of insurgent related victims.
- The party gives assurance to ‘health care to all’.
- The party pledge to minimize the disparity between the rural and the urban by establishing Sainik School, Medical Collee, Engineering College,
- The manifesto specifically highlighted special care provision to the underdeveloped areas in particular to Tuensang and Mon districts by building human resources and by providing stable infrastructures for economic developments.³⁷⁰

5.8.4.2 The Election Manifesto of 2013-

- The manifesto, which is of 58 pages long, made the Naga settlement as the key issue for the election campaign. The party promised a ‘permanent political settlement, which is honourable and acceptable to the Nagas if they are voted for power.’³⁷¹
- The manifesto also highlighted pan- Naga family integration, saying the NPF gives platform to the integration of all the Naga ethnic groups.
- On the issue of illegal immigrants in the state, NPF assured it would take up the issues with the neighbouring states while considering the voices of the different NGOs within the state.
- The party pledged to make Inner Line Permit (ILP) system fully computerised and thorough check on the misuse of the system to detect illegal infiltrators and delete the names from the electoral rolls.³⁷²

5.8.4.3 The 2018 Election Manifesto to Nagaland Legislative Assembly-

- Starting off with the Naga political issue, the manifesto said that the party had supported the call for solution before election. It further stated that the party

³⁷⁰ Ibid.

³⁷¹ <https://timesofindia.indiatimes.com/city/guwahati/naga-political-settlement-top-agenda-in-npf-manifesto/articleshow/18283336.cms>, “Naga Political Settlement top agenda in the NPF manifesto” on 1 February 2013, Retrieved on 31st October, 2022.

³⁷² Ibid.

is committed to making way for any new dispensation that would be required once final settlement is reached.

- The party would institute a separate Peace Subvention Fund towards supporting efforts aimed at expediting the resolution of the Naga political issue. It further reaffirmed the party's commitment to work towards "the realisation of a common Naga Homeland and shared Naga future through integration of contiguous Naga-inhabited areas."³⁷³
- Preservation and strengthening of Naga identity is a serious challenge, the NPF said it would, besides other measures, introduce in the school curriculum in the State, teaching of Naga heritage, Naga life values and moral education. It further harped on revival of Naga cultural values and social practices at the grassroots.
- The party said it would review the application of Naga customary laws and practices and initiate to bring in adequate legislative measures to strengthen and empower further the administrative and judicial functions of the Village Councils in the State.
- The manifesto touched on long-term reforms in state governance, systematic reforms and constitution of Administrative and Financial Reforms Commission.
- The manifesto stated that the party will immediately create appropriate platforms on State Government functioning, especially on government programmes, projects and schemes, and employment details of Government employees.
- It touched on empowerment of urban local bodies and village local bodies, broadening the mandate of the state finance commission and institutionalisation of development planning.
- It also promised legislators effective means of involvement in State Governance without attracting the question of holding an office of profit. The party also affirmed to pursue the issue of creating an Upper House in the

³⁷³ <https://morungexpress.com/npf-releases-election-manifesto>, "NPF releases election manifesto" on 6 February 2018, Dimapur. Retrieved on 31st August, 2022.

State Legislative Assembly and increasing the seats for Nagaland in the two Houses of Parliament.

- In order to rectify imbalances in development and to give special focus on development of backward areas, the party said projects and schemes of the government that are on-going and incomplete will be identified and appropriate steps taken to complete them within specific time-frame.
- On the issue of illegal immigration, the manifesto favoured streamlining and regulating the ILP issuance system further and a vigorous verification system.³⁷⁴

5.8.5 The Indian National Congress

5.8.5.1 The 1977 Election Manifesto to Nagaland Legislative Assembly-

- The party claimed its commitment to removing social disabilities of the reserved categories and women in the state. It pledged to protect the rights of the minority ethnic groups by highlighting the Congress stand on secularism.³⁷⁵
- The party pledged its commitment to the planned development of towns and cities. Urban poverties would be dealt by construction of houses for low-income groups.

5.8.5.2 The 1982 Election Manifesto of Nagaland Legislative Assembly-

- In the manifesto, the Congress-I assured its stand on the theme of ‘unity in diversity’ in protecting the languages, customs, tradition and heritage, the party pledged to take necessary steps for preserving the distinct characteristics of the Naga society.
- New and effective economic programme to serve the needs and interests of the people of Nagaland.

³⁷⁴ Ibid.

³⁷⁵ Election Manifesto 1977, published by Nagaland Pradesh Congress Committee, Kohima.

- Rural development programmes through the IRDP and NREP Schemes to create larger employment opportunities in rural areas.
- Comprehensive schemes to provide medical facilities in all villages and welfare programmes for women, children and disabled.
- The Congress party assured that the Prime Minister's Twenty- point Economic programme for the benefit of the weaker sections of the Nagas.
- The rural electrification scheme would receive special attention.
- The Party will take up special measures to fasten development in backward areas of Nagaland by providing additional funds.³⁷⁶

5.8.5.3 The 1989 Election Manifesto of Nagaland Legislative Assembly-

- One of the major highlights of the election manifesto of the 1989 election was the pledge of the party for special safeguards to preserve and maintain the Naga identity. The party's interest in setting up Naga Customary Court and special protection provided under Article 371 (A) of the Constitution of India.
- On the issue of Naga insurgency, the NPCC claimed that the underground Nagas are a part of Naga community, and the party pledged to continue to work for the solution of the on- going problems through negotiation and goodwill.
- The party claimed its commitment to balance and equal regional growth within the state.
- Special attention would be given to accelerate development of the backward areas within the state by taking up timebound programmes with adequate resources. The party pledge to take initiative in obtaining resources from the central government, accordingly Border Area Development Schemes are being implemented in some areas of Indo- Myanmar border in Nagaland.³⁷⁷

5.8.5.4 The 1993 Election Manifesto to the Nagaland Legislative Assembly-

³⁷⁶ Election Manifesto 1982, published by Nagaland Pradesh Congress Committee, Kohima.

³⁷⁷ Election Manifesto 1989, published by Nagaland Pradesh Congress Committee, Kohima.

- The Congress party declared the year 1993 as the ‘year of reconciliation and peace’. Accordingly, every effort would be made in achieving this.
- Priority focus on the youth welfare regarding job opportunities.
- For strengthening grassroot democracy, the party promised to revive Village and Area Councils.
- Decentralization of planning.
- Focus on land development and land reclamation for permanent cultivation shall be implemented in the field of agriculture.
- The Congress party accepted the on-going underground problem is a political problem, that need a political approach to solve. The party promised to bring meaningful dialogue with the Government of India by the spirit oneness among the stakeholders of the Nagas.
- In order to bring stable and lasting political solution, the party promised to bring all possible and constructive forces for unity and mutual understanding among the different groups of the underground outfits.
- The party promised to serve as a bridge between the central government and the underground outfits to bring the two parties to a negotiating table.³⁷⁸

5.8.5.5 The 2003 Election Manifesto to the Nagaland Legislative Assembly-

- In the lines of the political agenda, the party strongly re-affirms that the on-going problem of the Naga is a political problem that needs to resolve politically, through peaceful and democratic means.
- The party pledged to give importance to reconciliation process that requires political will in bringing permanent political stability. It also pledged to make the ceasefire agreements between the central government and the insurgent groups as a permanent ceasefire agreement. It should be implemented in letter and spirit.

³⁷⁸ Election Manifesto 1993, published by Nagaland Pradesh Congress Committee, Kohima.

- In the Socio- economic agenda, the manifesto claimed the party's commitment towards sustainable and rapid development of the people by adopting innovative and pragmatic strategies.
- The party pledged it renewed the commitment of the party towards the continued empowerment of women in Nagaland, and promised to set up State Commission for women, proper implementation of policies for women's welfare and adequate representation of women in the legislature.
- The party vowed to make tourism a priority for resource generation and employment generation.
- Adopting of 'Look East' policy by the centre in Nagaland for boosting trade and commerce with the South East Asian countries³⁷⁹.

5.8.5.6 The 2018 Election Manifesto to the Nagaland Legislative Assembly-

- Political: In its 10-point political stand, the NPCC stated that it will implement the “unimplemented points of the 16-Point Agreement of 1960 between the Government of India and the Naga People's Convention.”³⁸⁰ It also appealed to the NNC (A) and NSCN (K) to join the path of negotiations.
- The NPCC pledged to take various steps to curb the rampant electoral malpractices and corruption. The manifesto also promises to facilitate and enable women by providing greater participation through the party's commitment to 33% women reservation.
- For the Eastern Nagaland areas, it came up with a Special Economic Development Plan, a separate Mini-Secretariat under which Special Development Board shall be set up, with all schools from Primary to Middle level in the region receiving special attention for infrastructure development.
- While promising to “remove backdoor appointments, nepotism and bias,” Congress Government shall “streamline to provide free and fair recruitment

³⁷⁹ Nagaland Pradesh Congress Committee Election Manifesto 2003, published by Nagaland Pradesh Congress Committee, Kohima.

³⁸⁰ <https://morungexpress.com/npcc-releases-election-manifesto>, 'NPCC releases election manifesto' on 8 February, 2108, Dimapur, Retrieved on 31st August, 2022.

system by reviewing department service selection boards and NPSC.” It made this pledge to the youth.

5.8.6 Janata Dal United

5.8.6.1 The 2003 Election Manifesto to the Nagaland Legislative Assembly-

- The vision of the Janata Dal (United) is to strive for a new socio- economic-political order where in justice for all shall be met.
- Peace and rural development for the better future is the pledge of the party³⁸¹.
- The JD (U) promised the adoption of ‘three policies and programmes’- short term, medium term and long term.
- The party vowed to work for the physical and social integration of the Naga ethnic groups.
- The party pledged to work for responsible governance.³⁸²

5.8.7 Bharatiya Janata Party

5.8.7.1 The 2018 Election Manifesto to the Nagaland Legislative Assembly-

- The Bharatiya Janata Party (BJP) in its manifesto assured to bring sweeping changes and all-round development in Nagaland based on the principle of ‘Sabke saath, sabke vikas’ (Together with all, development for all).³⁸³
- The party stated its full support to the early and lasting settlement of Naga political issue.
- Others highlights of the BJP manifesto are: Innovative constituency infrastructure development, Protection of all minorities, Special programme for senior citizens, good roads for all, Housing for all, Health for all, strengthening of organic farming, adopting stringent anti-corruption

³⁸¹ Dr. V. Hokutu Jimomi ((2009), op.cit., p. 324.

³⁸² Ibid., p. 325.

³⁸³ <https://morungexpress.com/record-manifestos-political-parties-nagaland-election-2018>, “For the record: Manifestos of political parties for Nagaland election 2018” on 20 February, 2018, Dimapur, Retrieved on 31st August, 2022

measures, strictly regulating foreign migrants, Adaptation to climate change, Employment for youth, Empowerment of women.³⁸⁴

5.8.8 Nationalist Democratic Progressive Party (NDPP)

5.8.8.1 The 2018 Election Manifesto to the Nagaland Legislative Assembly-

The NDPP was formed a few months before the General Elections to the State Legislative Assembly in October, 2017. The objective of the party focus in into three themes – decisive leadership, stable government and visionary policies.

- In its political stand, the NDPP is on a firm stand that Indo- Naga issue must be resolved through a negotiated political settlement and an acceptable, honourable and sustainable solution must be reached at the earliest. The party promised to plan a pro-active facilitator role to bring an early solution.³⁸⁵
- Peace for development and development for peace
- Under the theme of development, the party claimed the manifesto provided the glimpse of development roadmap for Nagaland, implementation of the central projects with transparency, new innovations that in- tune with the local needs.
- Implementation of ‘a zero-tolerance policy’ for fighting corruption and nepotism.
- With regards to road and connectivity, the party promised to connect all the district capitals with good quality two lane highways.
- To facilitate India’s Act East Policy in undertaking road connectivity projects at the state border with Myanmar to further connect the ASEAN countries.
- On the issue of health care, the party promised the upgradation of all the district hospitals and the State Medical College would be made functional in a time- bound manner. Implementation of all national schemes and policies related health with transparency and accountability.

³⁸⁴ Ibid.

³⁸⁵ NDPP Manifesto for the Nagaland Legislative Assembly Election, 2018, p. 3

- On the issue of rural development, ‘Village Adoption Scheme’ would be introduced in all the constituencies to facilitate strict implementation of flagship programmes and close monitoring of policies. This policy is envisioned to further promote inter-tribal unity among the Nagas.
- Introduction of village excursions to towns and cities.
- On the issue to address the uneven development of the state, the party acknowledge the hurdles of the Eastern Nagaland and their demands, the party promised elaborate development plans like establishment of Mini-Secretariat, establishment and upgradation of international trade centres along the lines of international boundary to enhance cross-border trade and connectivity.
- Establishing a committee comprising of both government representative and representatives of NGOs (like ENPO/ ENSF) what would be responsible for various government job recruitments.
- A special cell for Eastern Nagaland in all the development departments; and proper implementation of reservation policy of the state in a transparent manner.³⁸⁶

After analyzing the electoral performance and election manifestos of political parties in Mizoram and Nagaland, one can conclude that political parties have their interest in right from the starting of statehood and in acquiring autonomy of Mizoram and Nagaland state. Identity issues are not the sole agenda for the election campaigns, but often highlight it as one of the agendas of the election. Especially in the state of Nagaland, identity politics are highlighted the form of political agenda as one means to bring long lasting peace.

On the issue of the role of national and regional parties in managing the national and regional interests, by analyzing the election manifestos, the issue of regional importance has gained priority over the issue of national importance

³⁸⁶ Ibid.

especially the regional parties. The interest of the tribals and their ethnicity always gained importance over national issues. Eg: the NDPP's 2018 election manifestos in which they highlighted different programmes for the eastern Nagaland to address the grievances of the tribes of eastern Nagaland.³⁸⁷

The rise and growth of the BJP in both the states and their impact towards the ethnic minorities are another major political development in the recent times. If one look at the 2018 State Legislative Assembly Elections of Mizoram and Nagaland, one could observe that the BJP for the first time marked their entrance into state politics by securing one seat, and the constituency of the BJP's MLA belongs to ethnic minority groups of Chakma in the southern Mizoram. Even in the District Council Elections in the southern Mizoram under the Autonomous District Councils of Mara Autonomous District Council (MADC) and the Chakma Autonomous District Council, the BJP marked their presence among these minority ethnic groups in the state. In Nagaland, the BJP is a part of the Democratic Alliance of Nagaland (DAN), a coalition government led by the NDPP, and secured 12 seats.

The issue of identity politics has to be adjusted not to promote the interest of a few sections of the society, but to promote the integrity and autonomy of the state as a whole. The rising demands more autonomy by minority ethnic groups in Mizoram and Nagaland occur due to lack of negligence and under- development³⁸⁸. The rising demands more autonomy by minority ethnic groups in Mizoram and Nagaland occur due to lack of negligence and under- development because of the actions of political parties who came into power. The minority ethnic groups in both the states felt that the only way of economic and social development for them is more

³⁸⁷ Ibid.

³⁸⁸ Based on the personal interviews given by Central Young Lai Association (CYLA) leader Pu Joseph Lalhmingthanga Chinzah on 25th November, 2022 at the Guest House, Mizoram University, Aizawl; and Mr. Wanguh Konyak, former Member of the Parliament (Lok Sabha) on 10th December, 2021 at his residence in Dimapur, Nagaland.

autonomy power that comes directly from the Central Government. This issue is a matter of concern that needs to be addressed by all political parties in both the states.

Regional imbalances and urban-rural development are quite pertinent in the political process. None of the political parties made the necessary structural change in the economic system, which is the basis of the election request. At best, some party commits to self-sufficiency in agriculture at a given time without announcing a political package. There is not much difference in terms of ideology between national and regional parties in both Mizoram and Nagaland, manifestos are made and design to suit the regional and sub- regional demands of the time. And much of the promise highlighted in the manifestos are not fulfilled by whichever party that came into power. One could argue that in most of the cases, election manifestos are just drafted and printed for the sake of making it. Therefore, it is obviously necessary for political parties to move their programs back from abstract idealism to concrete socio-economic changes for the development of the two states.

The Mizoram People's Front (MPF) has played an active role in the electoral politics of Mizoram since its inception in 2006. In every election including the State Legislative Assembly elections of 2008 and thereafter, MPF played the role of a political watchdog, keeping sharp and careful vigilance over the electioneering process of the state. The Nagaland Baptist Church Council (NBCC), the association of Baptist Churches in Nagaland and the biggest Christian denominations in Nagaland also take up an active part since 2013 Assembly Elections in the name of 'Clean Election Campaign'³⁸⁹, to curb the practice of excessive election expenditure and the culture of gun- power and insurgent group influence in the electoral politics. Yet, the role played by MPF and NBCC in both Mizoram and Nagaland is different, as MPF comprises of different Church denominations and NBCC comprises of different Baptist denominations only across the different Naga tribes.

³⁸⁹ Personal interview of Rev. Vikuo Rhi, Youth Secretary, Nagaland Baptist Church Council (NBCC) at the Headquarters of NBCC in Kohima, Nagaland on 8th December, 2021.

Chapter VI: Conclusion

The thesis focusses on the concept of identity politics in North East India, and the role play by political parties in shaping the identity politics in a comparative study in Mizoram and Nagaland. The two states of India, i.e., Mizoram and Nagaland have been chosen due to the fact that the formation of these states is done with the political agreement which is listed in Article 371 of the Indian constitution. The way in which the role of the state parties and identity politics played in the context of Indian federalism are highlighted in the thesis. How the political parties in Nagaland and Mizoram have their influence on their own ethnic groups across their geographical boundaries is being analyzed in this thesis. There are five chapters in the thesis, the first chapter is titled 'Introduction', the second chapter is titled 'Mizoram and Nagaland: An Ethno- Political Overview', the third chapter is titled 'Evolution of Political Parties in Mizoram and Nagaland', the fourth chapter is titled 'Role of Insurgency in the Identity Politics', the fifth chapter is titled 'Electoral Performance of Political Parties in Mizoram and Nagaland', and the sixth chapter is the concluding chapter.

The first chapter includes a review of literature, methodological details, and geopolitical profiles of Mizoram and Nagaland. The second chapter presents historical and political overviews of both states. The third chapter presents the political parties' evolution, formation, and functioning in both states. It also deals with political parties' linkages with ethnic identity politics in Mizoram and Nagaland. The fourth chapter discusses insurgency's role in forming identity politics and the statehood of Mizoram and Nagaland. The fifth chapter examines the electoral performance of political parties in terms of insurgency and identity politics in both states. The sixth chapter binds up to the research work and presents a summary of all five chapters. It also contains observations and findings of the research work.

Identity politics is a political position based on the interests and opinions of social groups with which people identify. It includes the ways in which political opinions are shaped by aspects of one's identity through loosely correlated social organizations. Erik H. Erikson presents the psychological aspects of the formation of individual identity, closely linking personal identity with cultural identity, recognizing the influence of society on the formation of the identity of an individual. Erikson says: "Identity formation deals with a process that is at the core of the individual and at the same time at the core of his (or her) community culture".

There are four main theoretical approaches to the study of ethnicity. These include primitivism, instrumentalism, materialism, and constructivism. These approaches include how to integrate the social and psychological dimension of ethnic identity and the relationship between state and ethnicity. Till the 1970s, the primordial approach which view ethnic identity as innate, fixed and permanent. They claimed that each individual is born into an ethnic group or 'tribe', that is perceived as culturally defined units. The instrumental approach challenged the original belief that ethnic groups were innately distinct bounded units cultural characteristics, suggesting that people selectively emphasize these forms an important cultural distinction for them. Furthermore, cultural characteristics are not fixed, they are situational. Materialist approach to ethnicity views ethnicity as a result of class relations, and they are underdeveloped in the literatures of Marxist theories. The constructionist approach belief that ethnicity is socially constructed, and is done so continuously through social interaction, by both elites and ordinary people. Ethnic identity is constructed in the form of literature, deviating from instrumentalist approach, by individuals, by discourse, and by broad social, political and economic forces.

Chapter first highlights the introduction of the study, and theoretical and conceptual framework of identity politics, political parties and role of political parties in shaping identity politics in Mizoram and Nagaland, the geo- politics of the

study areas, methodology of the research topics. In this chapter, theoretical perspective of identity, identity politics and political parties in Mizoram and Nagaland framework has been structured. In-dept analysis of review of available literatures are made in connection with the themes of thesis. The objectives of the study, the research questions, the research gap and the methodology of the study are outlined in chapter one.

Chapter two presents an over- view of the ethno- politics, its origin and historical development in Mizoram and Nagaland, mainly focusing on ethnic and historical formation, starting from the pre- colonial era, colonial era, after independence and the evolution of state formation of the two mentioned states. The chapter analyses the historical and ethnic formation of identity of the tribals in Mizoram and Nagaland, what was the administration and social life before the advent of the British administration in India. The social and political changes that was brought by the colonial administration are highlighted in the second chapter. Also, the importance of the advent of Christianity in the Lushai and Naga Hills, the religious changes it has brought among the different ethnic groups are highlighted. The advent of Christianity had brought a new dimension in ethnicity, that is Christian identity was evolved.

Chapter three revolves around in the genesis of the formation of political parties in the two states, the basis of identity politics and the role played by the political parties in promoting the ethnic identity. Detailed analysis of the birth of political parties in the two states have been discussed in this chapter.

The fourth Chapter deals with the concept of insurgency and the political upheaval in shaping the identity politics in Mizoram and Nagaland; since insurgency has played a big role in the political development in the two states. The meaning of insurgency, historical development of insurgent movement and its impact towards

political development, the issue of identity politics and the role in insurgency is dealing in this chapter.

The fifth chapter looks at party elections in Mizoram and Nagaland. It contains a comprehensive and comparative study of national and state parties. The chapter examines the role of political parties in bringing about political stability and political stability development of the region. Analysis of manifestos of the political parties in the parliamentary elections are included in this chapter.

The concluding chapter is the whole overview of the thesis, and the answering of the research questions and proof of the research objectives along with suggestions.

The main focus of the thesis is the role of political parties in the formation and development of identity politics, as the two states witnessed special status and since the colonial rule in the name of 'protecting the hill tribes from the outside'. Since the tribals were not allowed to interact with the non-tribals, many of the political rights were denied to them by the political leaders, and any political activities were banned in the Hill Districts. Therefore, one can argue that the Colonial 'exclusive policy towards the tribals' by passing many special laws for the administration of the Hill Tribes in Assam sowed the seed of identity consciousness. This is evident from the fact the Naga Club formed in 1918 submitted a memorandum to the Simon Commission in 1929, while visiting Kohima demanding that Nagas should be 'left alone' when the British decide to leave India. Later, the Naga National Council (NNC) was formed in March 1945 to represent the aspirations of the Nagas. Its representatives met a cabinet delegation in April 1946 and claimed that they did not agree to any constitutional provision of the Indian constitution.

Even at the Lushai Hills, Telela and his three friends, all belonged from Kulikawn in Aizawl met the District Superintendent in 1926 so that the Mizos could

have more participation in the affairs of the administration of the Lushai District. This has led to the banning of any political activities within the district, and some activists were put behind the bars. The founding of Young Mizo Association in 1935 was also a result of banning political activities within the district with the aim of converting the organization into a political party later on by the leaders of the YMA. Therefore, one can argue that the ethnic identity formation and consolidation in both Mizoram and Nagaland can be attributed to the colonial legacy of special administration that united the tribals and the feeling of protecting their own ethnic identity. Even on the eve of India's independence, the tribal leaders of both the states asserted that they want to stand on their own with having maximum autonomy.

In terms of identity consolidation, The Christian evangelization of the tribal areas of the northeast India by the western Christian Missionaries during the colonial period has changed the development identity among the tribal ethnic groups, more towards western and Christian identity and their cultural practices. For the Mizos, Christianity plays more prominent role than language in ethnic identity formation (detailed discussion in Page no 62 of Chapter II). The political consciousness among the early educated Mizos and the Nagas emerged because of the western education and Christianity. The missionaries introduced the western education along with the preaching of Christianity. The construction of Mizo national identity that developed in the mid-21st Century was the work of modern liberal Mizo middle class claimed by Sajal Nag, "this identity was based on cultural markers along with liberal, cosmopolitan and secular". (Detailed discussion in Page no 40 of Chapter II).

Both Nagaland and Mizoram had witnessed insurgency and political disturbance since the 1950s and the mid-1960s. But Mizo insurgency has ended with the signing of 'Peace Accord 1986', but Naga insurgency still continued after the famous 'Shillong Accord 1975' and signing of ceasefire agreement since 1997 and 'a framework agreement 2015' but permanent peace solution is yet to achieve in Nagaland, and this is one of the main political issues taken up by all political parties

given the fact that the state legislative assembly elections is coming in the near future. Both the political parties in the two states and the underground groups have neatly and cleverly in order to justify their anti- state violence, used ethnicity and nationalism issue as an agenda to achieve sovereignty.

As Christianity has influenced both the states since the early 20th Century, the underground and overground groups used Christianity as one agenda and objectives of their parties, and justified their actions in the name of saving minority religion in the larger Indian democratic framework. Therefore, one could argue that insurgent movements in Nagaland and Mizoram is emphasised on the lines of ethnic identity and the issue of Christian identity in the 21st Century, and the role played by the Church in both the states has to be acknowledged in bringing permanent peace and acting as a strongest negotiator between the insurgent groups and the Government of India.

6.1 Response to the Research Questions

Research question number one- what is historical background of identity politics in Northeast India with special reference to Mizoram and Nagaland? This is answered as the legacy of the colonial rule and their various administrative policies that were introduced at the hill districts of Assam.

Research question number two- What role does identity politics play in the formation of political parties in Northeast India with special reference to Mizoram and Nagaland? This is answered as the birth of political parties are mainly because of political awareness developed among the educated masses due to western education, dissatisfaction towards the then Assam government administration and to uphold the ethnic identity of the tribals, identity politics was not the sole issue of the formation of political parties. The sole agenda of ethnic identity or political party formation

based solely on ethnic lines is not the genesis of the formation of political parties in these two states.

Research question number three- What is the role of national and regional parties in managing the national and regional interests? This is answered as the role played by political parties in managing the national and regional interest depends upon the need of the people and the need of the hour. This could be answered from analyzing the election manifestos of political parties in Mizoram and Nagaland. No political party has made the necessary structural changes economic system as a basis of election complaint. At best, some parties are involved during a certain period of agricultural self-sufficiency without declaring insurance package.

There is not much difference in terms of ideology between national and state parties in both Mizoram and Nagaland, manifestos are made and design to suit the regional and sub- regional demands of the time. And much of the promise highlighted in the manifestos are not fulfilled by whichever party that came into power. One could argue that in most of the cases, election manifestos are just drafted and printed for the sake of making it. Political parties must recover their programs from abstract idealism specific socio-economic changes in the development of the country.

Research question number four- How does insurgency have impact upon political parties and identity politics in Mizoram and Nagaland? This is answered as insurgency had occurred because of lack of development and this led to re- assertion of identity politics. Therefore, insurgent groups like the NNC, NSCN and MNF in Mizoram and Nagaland have used insurgency and a political tool to gain more autonomy and used identity issue (in the form of Greater Mizoram and Nagalim) to gain the support of the masses. Political parties that have come up in the two states whether they are regional or national parties, more or less have the same stand on the issue of identity politics and assert upon political solution.

Research question number five- What are the implications of electoral performance of political parties for political stability and developments in Mizoram and Nagaland? This is answered by analyzing the perspective of insurgency in Mizoram and Nagaland, political parties have contributed towards the formation of statehood. Ethnic identity assertion in the form of insurgency has led to the attainment of statehood in both the states.

6.2 Observations & Findings

The Mizos and the Nagas have their own distinctive identity as a separate nation who had their own village rule and administrative. The advent of the colonial rule in the Hill District of Assam from the late 19th Century led to the re-assertion of their identity. The different inclusive administrative policies of the British which were executed in the name of protecting the Hill Tribes from the outside assimilation gave the identity of minority.

The Christian identity is being used by ethnic communities across the northeast states for the safeguarding of political interests. It helps ethnic communities in their political organization and mobilization toward greater political deals. Both identity politics and ethnic identity are complementary to each other. Christianity is a linking channel between the former two in Mizoram and Nagaland. In the Marxist perspective, ethnic identity is a base, and identity politics is a superstructure. Political parties play the role of means for identity politics and ethnic identity. Insurgency is very much linked with identity politics in Mizoram and Nagaland. It was used as a means for achieving political goals by political parties prior to obtaining statehood.

The advent of Christianity has a huge impact upon the identity development in both Mizoram and Nagaland. In terms of identity consolidation, for the Mizos and

Nagas, Christianity plays more prominent role than language in ethnic identity formation. The Christian evangelization of the tribal areas of the northeast India by the western Christian Missionaries during the colonial period has changed the development identity among the tribal ethnic groups, more towards western and Christian identity and their cultural practices. Even at the end of the colonial rule, the influence and the presence of the Christian missionaries to the tribals of the Assam hills districts gained importance as their contribution in the field of education and health section was much more than the government. Christian teachings and way of life slowly seeped into the cultural, social and political life of the states of Mizoram and Nagaland. Christianity changed the entire structure and culture of the Mizo people.

Christianity introduced western system of education that led to the development of political consciousness among the Mizos and the Nagas especially the early educated class. Even though during the British administration the Hill states of Assam were secluded by the different policies of the British, and the successive secluded policies adopted by the Indian Government in the name of giving more autonomy to the hill tribes of the Assam state.

When it comes to political parties in both Mizoram and Nagaland, it is clear that the emergence and evolution of political parties are not solely based on identity assertion, but because of the western education and political consciousness that developed among the early educated Mizos and the Nagas. Therefore, one can conclude that the birth and history of the formation of political parties in Mizoram and Nagaland is not only because of assertion of identity politics, but because of the gradual development of political awareness through western system of education that was introduced by the Christian Missionaries.

In the post- colonial rule, the impact of the colonial administration was still prevailed; the Mizos and the Nagas were given special autonomy of self- rule under the state of Assam. But due to lack of development and step- motherly treatment given by the authority, the feeling alienation started to develop among the tribals, and this has led to the insurgent movements in both the states. Right from the beginning, the Naga National Council formed in 1945 met the Cabinet Mission in April 1946 and asserted that they would not accept any kind of constitutional arrangement within the Indian Constitution. A nine- point agreement was arrived at, which recognized the distinctiveness of the Naga nation, and gave the latter the option of deciding within ten years to either join the Union of India or get independent. Launched a plebiscite in 1951 and 99% voted for the separate homeland.

The following year the Nagas boycotted the first Indian Parliamentary election and continued for freedom struggle and declared the formation of 'Naga Federal Republic' as a sovereign state on 22nd March 1956, under the leadership of the NNC. The first Mizo Political Party Mizo Union (MU) when they met the Bordoloi Committee in 1947 in Aizawl wanted Autonomous District Council for a period of ten years. The MNF started the independent movement because of discontentment towards the Assam Government during the Mautam famine in the late 1950s by using the lack of development and identity politics as the main cause of independent movement.

One of the major impacts of insurgent movements in Mizoram and Nagaland is state formation. The state of Nagaland was inaugurated as the sixteenth state of the Indian Union. on December 1, 1963 by the President of India Dr. Radhakrishnan; following the Sixteen Points Agreement by the Government of India, that the Naga People's Convention's Sixteen Points Proposal passed in their third session held at Mokokchung and submitted to the Prime Minister of India in June 1960. In the case of Mizoram, the insurgent movement led by the MNF came to an end after the 'Peace Accord' that was signed between the underground MNF and the Government

of India on 30th June, 1986. As per the Accord, The Union Parliament passed the 53rd Constitutional Amendment Bill, 1986 to make Mizoram a full-fledged state. Accordingly, on 20 February, 1987, it became the 23rd state of the Indian Union. Therefore, one can argue that ethnic insurgency led to the development of statehood in both Mizoram and Nagaland.

Christianity played an important role in the political developments in Mizoram and Nagaland. Christian identity gained importance in the construction of ethnic identity in both the state. The role of the Church leaders in bringing peace and signing the accords is one important political development in both the states. One cannot ignore the role played by the Mizoram Presbyterian Church in forming 'a Synod Standing Committee' that immediately called for a meeting of church leaders from the Baptist and Presbyterian Churches in the south and north of Mizoram to discuss their role amidst the public distress. This was followed by the formation of 'Peace Committee' in 1966 by Rev. Dr. Zairema, Rev. Dr. H. S Luaia and other Church leaders; which acted as mediators between the government and the undergrounds. Again, the formation of Mizoram Kohhran Hruaitute Committee' (MKHC) on August 13th 1982. The committee was created to revive the peace negotiation between MNF and Indian Government, and sent a representative of the peace emissary to the Government of India on March, 1985. From the beginning of insurgency till the signing of the Peace Accord in 1986, the Church played the most crucial role both socially and politically.

In the case of Nagaland, the Church right from the beginning when insurgency was intensified in the 1950s, leaders of Baptist Church stepped ahead to bring peace and normalcy. The negotiation under the initiative of the moderate Naga leaders, Church leaders, a separate new political unit 'Naga Hills Tuensang Area' was formed, this led to the formation of Naga Convention that paved way for the attainment of statehood in 1964. A Ceasefire Agreement of 1964 between the underground Naga and the Indian Government was achieved under the initiative of

the Church leaders that led to the establishment of Peace Mission' Again, in 1975, Leader of the Baptist Church played an important role in signing the famous Shillong Accord. Nagaland Peace Council (NPC) that was formed in 1974 was submitted a memorandum to the Governor of Nagaland for restoring permanent peace in Nagaland under the chairmanship of Rev Longro Ao. This was followed by the beginning of talks from 10th November, 1974 that led to several rounds of talk in Shillong that led to the signing of 'Shillong Accord' on 5th December, 1975 in which the underground Naga representatives agreed to accept the provisions under the Constitution of India.

Not only the Church plays an important role in bring political stability in both the states, the role of Christianity in the insurgent politics that is merged with ethnic identity is worth mentioning. The slogan of the underground MNF in 1966 *Pathian leh kan Ram tan* signifies how much religion was used as means to promote Mizo identity and the attainment of autonomy as a whole. The issue of insurgency and Christianity identity goes a long way in Nagaland political development and identity assertion. One of the objectives of Phizo's Naga National Council (NNC) was 'Nagaland for Christ'. To show their commitment to a Christian nation and separate themselves from these corrupt practices, the NNC and especially the NSCN preached a puritanical lifestyle that banned alcohol and drugs and sexual immorality in an attempt to "purify" the nation and encourage God. to fulfill his promise to make "Nagaland for Christ".

To strengthen this alliance, the NSCN established schools and clinics which went hand in hand with Christian teaching⁴⁷ and led by underground soldiers missionary work in the Naga region of Burma, converting over 40,000 "animists" christianity Biblical names like Zion, Canaan or NSCN-IM headquarters Hebron are are used as camp names meaning the spread of Christian symbols.

Mizoram People's Front (MPF) has played an active role in the electoral politics of Mizoram since its inception in 2006. In every election including the State Legislative Assembly elections of 2008 and thereafter, MPF played the role of a political watchdog, keeping sharp and careful vigilance over the electioneering process of the state. The Nagaland Baptist Church Council (NBCC), the association of Baptist Churches in Nagaland and the biggest Christian denominations in Nagaland also take up an active part since 2013 Assembly Elections in the name of 'Clean Election Campaign (detailed discussion in Page No167, Chapter V) to curb the practice of excessive election expenditure and the culture of gun- power and insurgent group influence in the electoral politics. Yet, the role played by MPF and NBCC in both Mizoram and Nagaland is different, as MPF comprises of different Church denominations and NBCC comprises of different Baptist denominations only across the different Naga tribes.

In Nagaland, BJP is a part of the ruling coalition of DAN. Even though the BJP has 12 MLAs in the ruling coalition, some claimed that it is 'the minority ruling the majority' in Nagaland government. 21 of 25 Naga People's Front (NPF) legislators switched over to Nationalist Democratic Progressive Party (NDPP) on April, 2022 ahead of state elections due in early 2023. This has shown the closed linkage between the regional parties and the Union government in Nagaland politics. In the case of Mizoram, even though MNF is a part of NEDA and NDA, especially in the Autonomous District Council Areas (ADCs) in the southern part of Mizoram, the main power contestation is between the MNF and the BJP.

Both Mizoram and Nagaland witness the rising of right-wing politics in their states. The BJP has gained popularity in both the states especially after the 2013 State Assembly Elections in both the state. Eventhough BJP was present in both the states from the 1990s, it could never gain its strong hold. But if one analyses the post 2010 state politics in Mizoram and Nagaland, both the ruling parties are in the members of the North- East Democratic Alliance (NEDA) formed by the BJP in 2016 to unite the non-Congress parties in the north east states.

Again, it has already been mentioned that the ethnic politics in Mizoram and Nagaland resulted in the formation of statehood, if we look at the stronghold of the BJP in Mizoram politics, the presence of the Party is seen in the smaller ethnic Mara and Chakma areas of Autonomous District Councils. In Nagaland, the BJP is a part of coalition government known as Democratic Alliance of Nagaland (DAN). Therefore, one can argue that the rising influence of the right-wing party in Mizoram and Nagaland encourages the demands of new autonomy/ statehood in the lines of ethnic minorities in Mizoram and Nagaland. For example, the Maras in the Mara Autonomous District Council and the Lais in LADC areas raised their concern for more autonomy than the present arrangement under the Sixth Schedule of the Constitution of India. At the same time, the Eastern Nagaland Peoples' Organization (ENPO) constantly raised their political demands of statehood for the Eastern part of Nagaland.

By analyzing the election manifestos and performance of the parties in Mizoram and Nagaland, it is clear that none of the parties in either state have made the necessary structural changes in the economic system to justify the election bid. At best, some party commits to self-sufficiency in agriculture at a given time without mentioning the political package. There is not much difference in terms of ideology between national and state parties in both Mizoram and Nagaland, manifestos are made and design to suit the regional and sub-regional demands of the time. And much of the promise highlighted in the manifestos are not fulfilled by whichever party that came into power. One could argue that in most of the cases, election manifestos are just drafted and printed for the sake of making it. Therefore, it is obviously necessary for the political parties to move their programs back from abstract idealism to specific goals of socio-economic changes according to the development of the states.

The biggest difference between Mizoram and Nagaland in terms of political developments is that in Mizoram, the signing of the 'Peace Accord 1986' led to the ending of insurgency, which is not the case for Nagaland. The signing of the 'Shillong Accord 1975' did not end insurgent politics; rather led to the birth of a new underground outfit NSCN. The demand for permanent peace agreement is the biggest political agenda of all political parties across the state. The unique and common aspect of political developments in Mizoram and Nagaland is the involvement of various civil society organizations in the electoral politics. In both Mizoram and Nagaland, unhealthy electoral trends such as the use of money and muscle power in elections were observed slowly and gradually.

Insurgency still plays a bigger role in Naga Politics and political parties across the state accused each other of using gun power for winning the elections. Permanent political solution is the need of the hour. But this is not the case for Mizoram. It is claimed that the Mizo Peace Accord of 1986 is one the of most successful Accord that has been signed by the Government of India.

Identity politics has been used by political parties in Mizoram and Nagaland as a tool for gaining political power and winning the elections. For example, the PC's party stand on re- unification of ZO inhabited areas under one single administrative unit, even sending memorandum to the Prime Minister of India in 1982. When the PC party was voted to power from 1984 onwards, they used this "unification of ZO populated areas" as their propaganda and tried to win the support and sympathy of the masses both inside and outside Mizoram. At the same time, the MNF also used this issue as one of the objectives of the party and it was the main goal during the insurgency movement. Now along with the NGOs, the political parties are talking about the unification of ethnic groups of the Mizos under the constitutional norms, and showed their best in promoting it even in spirit. At the same time, the identity issues and the end of insurgency always remains the biggest political agenda of all the political parties in Nagaland irrespective of their ideologies and their stands.

6.3 Suggestions

1. Political parties in Mizoram and Nagaland should fight the political space within their ideology and objectives of their parties. By seeing the performance and stand of political parties, many political parties existed for the sake of exiting, not really put forward the meaning and different functioning of political parties.
2. The issue of identity politics has to be adjusted not to promote the interest of a few sections of the society, but to promote the integrity and autonomy of the state as a whole. The rising demands for more autonomy by minority ethnic groups in Mizoram and Nagaland occur due to neglect and underdevelopment because of the actions of political parties who came into power. The minority ethnic groups in both the states felt that the only way of economic and social development for them is more autonomy power that comes directly from the Central Government. This issue is a matter of concern that needs to be addressed by all political parties in both the states.
3. Power hungry and corrupt nature of political leaders that brings out economic disparities between the masses in both states lead to instability of government and unequal development within the state.
4. Election manifestos and agendas should not be designed just for the sake of making it, it should be used as one of the yardsticks to measure the performance of a ruling party.
5. The ethnic and minority politics in terms of favouritism can result in further disunity within the state, political parties should try to avoid this as much as possible.
6. The political parties should try their level best in to promote and protect the special privileges that has been listed in a special provision under Article 371 (A) and Article 371 (G) of the Indian Constitution.
7. Economic disparities, increasing unemployment problems lead to the promotion of insurgent movements in many areas of Nagaland as the movement is somehow taken as a way of earning livelihood. Political parties need to address this issue.

8. For the case of Nagaland, the biggest hurdle in the political development, a Framework Agreement of 2015 should be made as a permanent peace settlement, which has been negotiated by the NSCN (IM) and the Government of India since 2019. Political willingness on the part political parties, Civil Society Organizations and the underground is the need of the hour.
9. Both Mizoram and Nagaland can play a positive role in bringing political stability and development in the North East region. Mizoram can be used as a model state for peace and stability in an institution like the North Eastern Council (NEC) which was created in 1972.
10. Since Mizoram and Nagaland share international border with Myanmar and there are same ethnic tribes live in both the borders, insurgency could be contained in both sides of the border by bringing infrastructure development in the border areas. Political parties in both the states could play a bigger role in this by bringing out a solid economic and social infrastructure development plans and implementation of various social welfare schemes.

Table 6.1: Comparative details of Mizoram and Nagaland

S. NO	Content	Mizoram	Nagaland
1.	Ethno- political background	Impact of the different secluded policies of the colonial rulers ‘leave the tribals alone’ policy created a self-isolation feeling among the Mizos	Impact of the different secluded policies of the colonial rulers ‘leave the tribals alone’ policy created a self-isolation feeling among the different ethnic tribes of the Nagas.
2.	Formation of political parties	Political parties are not solely founded on the basis of ethnic	Political parties are not solely founded on the

		identity assertion, but because of the western education and political consciousness.	basis of ethnic identity assertion, but because of the western education and political consciousness.
3.	Impact of religion in identity formation	Besides the Zo sub-ethnic identity, the advent of Christianity asserted a new identity among the Mizos. The new Christian and Mizo identity as a whole was a new political development of the Mizos in the 20 th Century	Christianity asserted a new identity among the sub-tribes of the Nagas, but unlike the Mizos, it could not bring a new pan-identity among the different sub-tribes of Nagaland.
4.	Role of insurgency in identity formation	State formation is the outcome of insurgency. It asserted a pan-Mizo and Christian identity as a whole. The slogan of the MNF with 'Pathian leh kan ram tan'	Insurgency could not assert one Naga identity as a whole. Even though the insurgent groups claim the Nagas are not Indians, one pan-Naga identity as a single group is not developed.
5.	Role of political parties in political developments	All political parties are functioning within the norms of the Indian Constitution. Corruption and money power play an important role during election times.	Insurgency, money power, corruption and violence still play a larger picture in the political developments of Nagaland.
6.	Growing influence of the right-wing politics	Mizoram has witnessed the growing impact of the BJP in the southern Mizoram towards the ethnic minorities like Mara,	The BJP's domination of the state politics across the different ethnic groups can be witnessed

		Chakma and Brus.	since 2018 state legislative assembly elections.
7.	Role of Civil Society Organizations	NGOs like YMA, Churches and MPF play bigger role in the state politics and in bringing political stability. The role of the Church during the times of election for clean election is a huge milestone in the political development of Mizoram. There is a thorough co-operation between the NGOs and the political parties.	The role of the CSOs and the Church in the state politics and insurgency is less significant in Nagaland compared to Mizoram. Co-operation between political parties and NGOs is less visible compared to Mizoram.
8	Issue of tribalism	Tribalism or sub-ethnic identity is not an issue of Mizoram for one identity formation.	Tribalism is the biggest issue in Nagaland for identity formation.
9	Ethnic Politics	Led to the formation of statehood	Led to the formation of statehood

The thesis shows the concept of identity politics in Mizoram and Nagaland, the role plays by political parties in shaping the identity politics in a comparative study. One can conclude that political developments that take place in the two states are the results of the policies of the colonial rule and the continuation of similar policies implemented by the Indian government after independence. These had led to the development of identity assertion in the form of extremism i.e insurgency by fighting more autonomy and independence from the Indian Union. Ethnic politics led to the formation of statehood in both Mizoram and Nagaland. However, the birth and development of political parties is not solely based on identity politics, but by the outside factors such as the western system of education and political culture

contributed to the growth and birth of political parties in the two states. Also, the contribution of Christianity towards the expansion of identity politics and tribalism among the two states and the role played by the institutions of the Churches and civil society organizations are worth mentioning in enhancing tribal identity politics in these two states.

Appendix 1

MEMORANDUM SUBMITTED TO
THE PRIME MINISTER OF INDIA
BY THE MIZO NATIONAL FRONT GENERAL
HEADQUARTERS : AIZAWL, MIZORAM
ON THE 30TH OF OCTOBER, 1965.

This Memorandum seeks to represent the case of the Mizo people for freedom and independence for the right of territorial unity and solidarity and for realisation of which a fervent appeal is submitted to the Government of India.

The Mizos, from time immemorial lived in complete independence without foreign interference. Chiefs of different clans ruled over separate hills and valleys with supreme authority and their administration were very much like that of the Greek City State of the past.

Their territory or any part thereof had never been conquered or subjugated by their neighbours and frontier clashes with their neighbouring states. However, there had been border disputes and frontier clashes with their neighbouring people which ultimately brought the British Government to the scene in 1844. The Mizo country was subsequently brought under the British political Control in December 1895 when a little more than half the country was arbitrarily carved out and named Lushai Hills (now Mizo District) and the rest of their land was parcelled out of their hands to the adjoining pool for the sole purpose of administrative convenience without obtaining their will or consent. Scattered as they are divided the Mizo people are inseparably knit-

ted together by their strong bond of tradition, custom, culture, language, social life and religion wherever they are. The Mizos stood as a separate nation even before the advent of the British Government having a nationality distinct and separate from that of India.

In a nut-shell, they are a distinct nation, created, moulded and nurtured by God and nature.

When British India was given status by promulgation of the Constitution Act of 1935 the British Government having fully realised the distinct and separate nationality of Mizo people decided that they should be excluded from the purview of the new Constitution and they were accordingly classed as an 'EXCLUDED AREA' in terms of the Government Order 1936. Their land was then kept under the special responsibility of the Governor general-in-Council in his capacity of the Crown representative, and the legislature of the British India had no influence whatsoever.

In other words the Mizos had never been under the Indian Government and never had any connection with the politics and the policies, of the various groups of Indian opinion. When India was in the threshold of independence the relation of the Mizos with the British Government and also with the British India were fully realised by the Indian National Congress Leaders. Their top leader and spokesman Pandit Jawaharlal Nehru released a press statement on the 19th August 1946 and stated: "The Tribal areas are defined as being those along the frontier of India which are neither part of India, nor of Burma, nor of any Indian state, nor of any foreign power." He further stated, "The

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areas subsidised and the Governor General's relation with the inhabitants are regulated by sanads, customs or usage. In the matter of internal administration the areas are largely left to themselves" Expressing the view of the Indian National Congress he continue "Although the tribal areas are technically under the sovereignty of his Majesty's Government, their status, when a new Constitution comes into force in India, will be different from that of Aden over which the Governor-General no longer has executive authority. Owing to their inaccessibility and their importance to India in its defence strategy, their retention as British possession is most unlikely. One view is that with the end of sovereignty in India the new GOVERNMENT OF INDIA (i.e. Independent Government of India) will enter into the same relations with the tribal areas as the Governor-General maintains now, unless the people of these areas choose to seek integration with India"

From the foregoing statement made by Pandit Jawaharlal Nehru and the Constitution Act of 1935, it is quite clear that the British Government left the Mizo Nation free and Independent with the right to decide their future political destiny,

Due solely to their Political immaturity, ignorance, and lack of consciousness of their fate, representatives of the Mizo Union, the largest political organisation at that time and fifty accredited Mizo Leaders representing all political organisations including representatives of religious denominations and social organisation that were existing, submitted their demand and choose integration with free India imposing condition

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interalia, "THAT THE LUSHAI HILLS WILL BE ALLOWED TO OPT OUT OF INDIA UNION WHEN THEY WISH TO DO SO SUBJECT TO MINIMUM PERIOD OF TEN YEARS,"

The political immaturity and ignorance which lead the Mizo people to the misguided choice of integration with India was direct result of the banning by the British Government of any kind of political organisation till April 1946 within Mizo land which was declared a political area.

During fifteen years of close contact and Association with India, the Mizo people had not been able to feel at home with Indian or India, nor have they been able to feel that their joys and sorrows have really ever been shared by India. They do not, therefore, feel Indian. Being created a separated nation they cannot go against the nature to cross the barriers of nationality. They refuse to occupy a place within India as they consider it to be unworthy of their national dignity and harmful to the interest of their prosperity. Nationalism and Patriotism inspired by the political consciousness has now reached its maturity and to cry for political self-determination is the only wish and aspiration of the peoples, neplus ultra, the only final and perfect embodiment of social living for them, The only aspiration and political cry is the creation of Mizoram, a free and sovereign state to Govern herself to work out her own destiny and to formulate her own foreign policy.

To them independence is not even a problem or subject of controversy, there cannot be dispute over the subject nor could there be any difference of opinion in the

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matter. It is only a recognition of human rights and to let others live in the dignity to human person.

While the present world is strongly committed to freedom and self determination of all nations, large or small and to promotion of fundamental human rights wedded to that principle taking initiative for and championing the cause of Afro-Asian countries, even before the World Body, particularly deploring domination and colonisation of the weaker nations by the stronger, old or new, and advocating peaceful co-existence settlement of international dispute of any kind through the medium of non-violence and in condemning weapons that can destroy the world and in general wishing of good will towards mankind the Mizo people firmly believe that the Government of India and their leaders will remain true to their policy and that they shall take into practice what they advocate blessing the Mizo people with their aspiration for freedom and independence per principle that no one is good enough to govern another man without that man's consent.

Though known as head-hunters and a martial race, the Mizos commit themselves to a policy of non-violence in their struggle and have no intention of employing any other mean to achieve political demand. If on the other hand the Government of India brings exploitive and suppressive measures into operation, employing military might against the Mizo people as in the case of the Nagas which God forbid it would be equally erroneous and futile for both the parties a soul cannot be destroyed by weapons,

Important Documents of Mizoram

For this it is in good will and understanding that the Mizo Nation voices her rightful and legitimate claim of full self determination through this memorandum. The Government of India, in their turn and in conformity with the unchallengable truth expressed and resolved among the text of HUMAN RIGHTS by the United Nations in its august Assembly that in order to maintain peace and tranquility among mankind every nation may of rightable free and independent, shall set Mlizo nation free to work out her own destiny to the formulate her own internal and external policies and shall accept and recognise her political independent. Would it not be a selfish motive and design of India and would it not amount to an act of offence against humanity if the Government of India claim the Mizoram as a part of their territory and try to retain her as their possession against the national will of the Mizo people simply because their land is important for India's defence strategy.

Whether the Mizo Nation should shed her tears in joy to establish firm and lasting friendship with India in war and in peace or in sorrow and in anger, is up to Government of India to decide.

S.Lianzuala
General Secretary

Laldenga President
Mizo National Front

30th Oct. 1965.

Appendix 2

MNF Declaration of Independence, March 1, 1966

DECLARATION OF INDEPENDENCE

In the course of human history it becomes invariable necessary for mankind to assume their social, economic and political status to which the Law of Nature's God entitle them. We hold this truth to be self-evident that all men are created equal, and that they are endowed with inalienable fundamental human rights. Governments are instituted among men deriving their just power from the consent of the governed and whenever any form of government becomes destructive of this end, it is the right of the people to alter, change, modify and abolish it, and to institute a new government laying its foundation on such principles, and organising its powers in such forms as to them shall seem most likely to effect their right and dignity. The Mizo, created and moulded into a nation and nurtured as such, by Nature's God have been intolerably dominated by the people of India in contravention of the Law of Nature.

The Leaders of Mizo Nation had, many a time, verbally and in writing, put forward to the Government of India, their desire of self-determination for creation of free and independent Mizoram for bringing about protection of Human Rights and Dignity, which the Mizo, by nature, ought to have; but the Government of India violating the Charter of the United Nations and its Universal Declaration of Human Rights re-affirmed in the Principles of the Bandung Conference, have ignored the voice of the Mizo people and are determined to continue domination and colonisation ruling over us with tyranny and despotism by instituting self-designed administrative machinery with which they endeavour to mislead the world to win their confidence.

Our people are despised, persecuted, tortured, manhandled, and murdered without displaying justice while they preach and profess before us and throughout the world that they have instituted for us a separate administrative set up in conformity with the principles of Democracy. To conceal their evil and selfish design, religious assimilation and Hindu indoctrination, they preach to have established which we cannot accept as it leads to suppression of Christianity.

To prove this, let facts be submitted to the candid world that:

1. They have instituted government to rule over us in our own country without any respects for Human Rights and Dignity even in the face of the present candid world, which is committed to these rights and dignity.
2. They have been pursuing a policy of exploitive measures in their attempt to wipe out Christianity, our sole religion,

and no consideration has even been paid to our national way of life.

3. They have been preaching throughout the world as if they have instituted a separate administrative machinery in conformity with the principles of Democracy to conceal their policy of generation of our national morality and of assimilation while what had been instituted for us is a pattern of colonial administration.
4. They refuse not only to procure supply of food and arrange other forms of assistance in times of famine, but also prohibited us from seeking and receiving assistance from friendly countries, which resulted in the death of many people.
5. They have established a multitude of Offices and sent hither-to swarms of Indian Officers, who lead an immoral life cruelly appeasing our womenfolk to commit immorality with them by taking advantages of their official capacity and of the position they occupy in the administrative machinery.
6. Taking the advantage of economic frustration of the people they subject us to economic slavery and force us to enter into the door of poverty.
7. Curbing freedom of expression, our patriots are arrested and kept in jails without displaying any form of justice.
8. The export facilities which we used to enjoy during the pre-Indian domination, has been totally closed.
9. Without exploring our country's economic resources in agriculture, industries and mining and giving no consideration for their development, they maintain suppressive measure against our economic rights.
10. Realising the importance of our country to India in its defence strategy, the Government of India is establishing military bases throughout our country and thereby creating an atmosphere of cold war while nothing is done for its economic and social development.
11. In spite of our repeated appeal for peaceful settlement of our rightful and legitimate demand for full self-determination, the Government of India is bringing exploitive and suppressive measures employing their military might and waging war against us as done in the case of the Nagas and the Kashmiris.
12. Owing to absence of Medical facilities in our country, our people died without having medical treatment and attention.

For these and all other innumerable causes, we declared to the candid world that India is unworthy and unfit to rule over the civilised Mizo people who are created and moulded into a Nation and nurtured as such and endowed with territorial integrity by Nature and Nature's God.

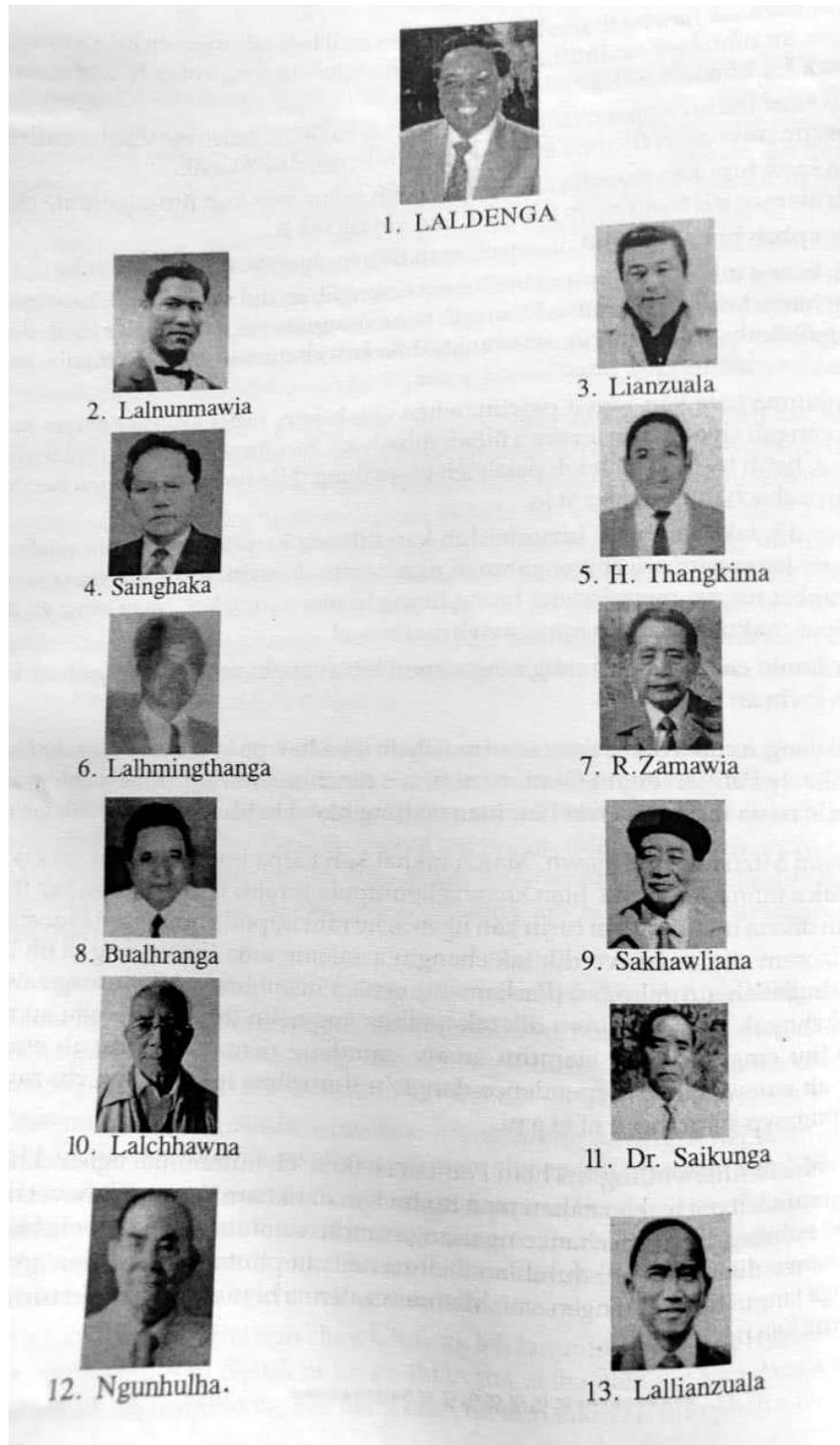
We, therefore, the Representatives of Mizo people, meeting on this day, the first of March, in the year of our Lord, 1966 appealing to the Supreme Judge of the World for the rectitude of our intentions, in the name and by the authority of the good people of this country, solemnly publish and declare, that Mizoram is and of rights ought to be free and independent; that they are absolved from all allegiance to India and its Parliament and all Political connections between them and to Government of India is and ought to be dissolved and that as free and independent State, they have full power to levy war, conclude peace, contract alliances, establish commerce and to do all other Acts and Things which Independent States may of right do. And for the support of this Declaration, we mutually pledge to each other with a firm reliance on the Protection of Divine Providence, our Lives, our Fortunes, and our Secred Honour. We appeal to all freedom loving nations and individuals to uphold Human Rights and Dignity and to extend help to the Mizo people for realisation of our rightful and legitimate demand for self-determination. We appeal also, to all independent countries to give recognition to the Independence of Mizoram.

- | | | |
|-------------------|--------------------|--------------------|
| | 1. LALDENGA | |
| 2. Lalnunmawia | 3. Lianzuala | 4. Sainghaka |
| 5. Lakhawliana | 6. Thangkima | 7. Lalhmingthanga |
| 8. Zamawia | 9. Ngurkunga | 10. Bualhranga |
| 11. Sakhawliana | 12. Lalchhawna | 13. Lalhmuaka |
| 14. Saikunga | 15. Ngunhulha | 16. Lallianzuala |
| 17. Malsawma | 18. Tlangchhuaka | 19. Vanmawia |
| 20. Ngurchhina | 21. Hrangchhinga | 22. Thangmawia |
| 23. Chuailokunga | 24. V.L. Nghaka | 25. Zoramthanga |
| 26. Thangzika | 27. Khawlremthanga | 28. Hlunsanga |
| 29. Chhunzawna | 30. Vala | 31. Thanghuta |
| 32. Dokhuma | 33. Rosanga | 34. Thangkhuma |
| 35. Hnuna | 36. Thangbuaia | 37. Lamputa |
| 38. Thanghuaia | 39. Lalluta | 40. Lalchuanga |
| 41. Vansiama | 42. Thatthiauva | 43. Vanhnuaithanga |
| 44. Lalchhawna | 45. Vanlalzika | 46. Kapthanga |
| 47. Challiana | 48. Pachhunga | 49. Zamanthanga |
| 50. Rochhinga I | 51. Rochhinga II | 52. Vankunga |
| 53. Rohmingthanga | 54. Vanlalliana | 55. Thanglawra |
| 56. Rangkhuma | 57. Lalhruaia | 58. Duma |
| 59. Zanenga | 60. Lalnundawta | 61. Lalkhawhena |

Source: R. Zamawia, *Zofate Zinkawngah Zalenna Mei A Mit Tur A Ni Lo* (Aizawl: Self-published, 2007), 973-975.

Appendix 3

Photos of MNF leaders who signed the Declaration of Independence of Mizoram on March 1, 1966





14. R. Thangmawia



15. Vanmawia



16. Ngurchhina



17. Tlangchuaka



18. Chuailokunga



19. V.L. Nghaka



20. Thangzika



21. Kawlremthanga



22. Hlunsanga



23. Vala



24. Thanghuta



25. James Dokhuma



26. Thangkhuma



28. Thanghuaia



30. Lalluta



32. Thatthiauva



34. Vanlalchhawna



36. Challiana



27. Hnuna



29. Thanghuaia



31. Lalchuanga



33. Vanhnuaithanga



35. Kapthanga



37. Pachhunga



38. Rochhinga I



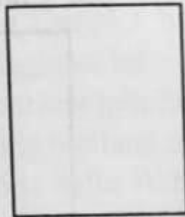
39. Rochhinga II



40. R. Vankunga



41. C. Vanlalliana



42. Thanglawra



43. Rangkhuma



44. Duma



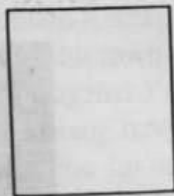
45. Zanenga



46. Lalnundawta



47. Lalkhawliana



48. Ngurkunga



49. Lalhmuaka



50. Malsawma Colney



51. K. Hrangchhinga



52. Zoramthanga



53. Chhonzawna



54. Rolala



55. Lamputa



56. K. Vansiamia



57. Vanlalzika



58. Zamanthanga



59. K. Rohmingthanga



60. Vanlalhruaia



61. Lalkhawhen

Source: MNF General Headquarters, *Documentary of Mizoram War of Independence: 1966 to 1986*. Aizawl: MNF General Headquarters, 2017.

Mizoram Accord - 1986
(Government of India and Mizo National Front)
Memorandum of Settlement

Preamble

1. Government of India has all along been making earnest efforts to bring about an end to the disturbed condition in Mizoram and to restore peace and harmony.
2. Toward this end, initiative was taken by the late Prime Minister Smt. Indira Gandhi on acceptance by Shri Laldenga on behalf of the Mizo National Front (MNF) of the two conditions, namely, cessation of violence by MNF and to hold talks within the framework of the Constitution. A series of discussions were held with Shri Laldenga. Settlement on various issues reached during the course of talks is incorporated in the following paragraphs.

Restoration of Normalcy

- 3.1. With a view to restoring peace and normalcy in Mizoram, the MNF Party on their part undertake within the agreed time-frame, to bring out all underground personnel of the MNF with their arms, ammunitions, and equipments, to ensure their return to civil life, to abjure violence and generally to help in the process of restoration of normalcy. The modalities of bringing out all underground personnel and the deposit of arms, ammunitions and equipments will be as worked out. The implementation of the foregoing will be under the supervision of the Central government.
- 3.2. The MNF party will take immediate steps to amend its articles of Association so as to make them conform to the provision of Law.
- 3.3. The Central government will take steps for the settlement and rehabilitation of the undergrounds after considering the scheme proposed in this regard by the Government of Mizoram.
- 3.4. The MNF will not undertake to extend any support to the Tripura National Volunteers (TNV), the Peoples Liberation Army of Manipur (PLA) and any other such

group by way of training, supply of arms or providing protection or in any other matter.

Legal, Administrative and Other Steps

- 4.1. With a view to satisfying the desires and aspirations of all sections of the people of Mizoram, the Government will initiate measures to confer Statehood on the Union Territory of Mizoram subject to the other stipulation contained in this memorandum of Settlement.
- 4.2. To give effect to the above, the necessary legislative and administrative measures will be undertaken, including those for the enactment of Bills for the amendment of the Constitution and other laws for the conferment of Statehood as aforesaid, to come into effect on a date to be notified by the Central government.
- 4.3. The amendment aforesaid shall provide, among other things, for the following.
 - i. The territory of Mizoram shall consist of the territory specified in Section 6 of the North Eastern Areas (Reorganisation) Act, 1971.
 - ii. Notwithstanding anything contained in the Constitution, no Act of Parliament in respect of (a) Religion or social practices of the Mizos, (b) Mizo customary law or procedure, (c) Administration of Civil and Criminal justice involving decisions according to Mizo customary Law, (d) Ownership and transfer of land, shall apply to the State of Mizoram unless the Legislative Assembly of Mizoram by a resolution so decides.

Provided that nothing in this Clause shall apply to any Central Act in force in Mizoram immediately before the appointed day.
 - iii. Article 170 Clause (1) shall, in relation to Legislative Assembly of Mizoram, have effect as if for the word 'sixty' the word 'forty' has been substituted.
5. Soon after the Bill of Conferment of Statehood becomes Law, land when the President is satisfied that normalcy has returned and that conditions are conducive to the holding of free and fair elections, elections to the Legislative Assembly will be initiated.

6. (a) The Centre will transfer resource to the new government keeping in view the change in Status from a Union Territory to a State and will include resources to cover the revenue gap for the year. (b) Central assistance for Plans will be fixed taking note of any residuary gap in resources so as to sustain the approved Plan outlay and the pattern of assistance will be as in the case of Special Category State.
7. Border trade in locally produced or grown agricultural commodities could be allowed under a scheme to be formulated by the Central government, subject to international arrangement with neighbouring countries.
8. The Inner-line Regulation, as now in force in Mizoram, will not be amended or repealed without consulting the State government.

Other Matters

9. The rights and privileges of the minorities in Mizoram as envisaged in the Constitution, shall continue to be preserved and protected and their social and economic advancement shall be ensured.
10. Steps will be taken by the Government of Mizoram at the earliest to review and codify the existing customs, practices, laws or other usages relating to the matters specified in Clauses (a) to (b) of para 4.3. (II) of the memorandum, keeping in view that an individual Mizoram prefers to be governed by Acts of Parliament dealing with such matters and which are of general application.
11. The question of Unification of Mizo inhabited areas of other States to form one administrative unit was raised by the MNF delegation. It was pointed out to them, on behalf of the Government of India, that Article 3 of the Constitution of India describes the procedure in his regard but that the Government cannot make any commitment in this respect.
12. It was also pointed out on behalf of the Government that, as soon as Mizoram becomes a State:
 - i. The Provisions of Part XVII of the Constitution, will apply and the State will be at liberty to adopt any one

- or more languages to be used for all or any of the official purposes of the State.
- ii. It is open to the State to move for the establishment of a separate University in the State in accordance with the prescribed procedure.
- iii. In the light of the Prime Minister's Statement at the Joint Conference of the Chief Justices, Chief Minister and Law Ministers held at New Delhi on August 31, 1985 Mizoram will be entitled to have a High Court of its own if it so wishes.
13. (a) It was noted that there is already a scheme in force for payment of exgratia amount to heirs/dependants of persons who were killed during disturbances in 1966 and thereafter in the Union Territory of Mizoram. Arrangement will be made to expeditiously disburse payment to those eligible persons who have already applied but who had not been made such payment so far.
- (b) It was noted that consequent on verification done by a joint team of officers, the Government of India had already made arrangement for payment of compensation in respect of damage to crop, building destroyed/damaged during action in Mizoram, and rented charges of building and land occupied by security force. There may, however, be some claim which were referred and verified by the above team but is not yet settled expeditiously. Arrangement will also be made for payment of pending claim of rented charges or land/building occupied by the security force.

Signed/-
(Laldenga)
On behalf of Mizo National Front

Signed/-
(R.D. Pradhan)
Home Secretary
Government of India

Signed/-
(Lalkhama)
Chief Secretary, Government of Mizoram
Date: 30th June 1986
Place: New Delhi

SEQUENCE OF EVENTS

The Memorandum of Settlement contemplates the following sequence of events:

1. Coming overground of MNF personnel and depositing of arms, ammunition and equipment by them in accordance with the time bound programme as already agreed upon between the Ministry of Home Affairs and the MNF delegation.
2. The MNF party should take immediate steps to amend its Articles of Association to make them conform to the provisions of law.
3. Government will initiate steps for rehabilitation of MNF personnel coming overground.
4. After completion of action under paragraphs (1) and (2) above, a Constitution Amendment Bill will be introduced in Parliament for the grant of Statehood and other consequential legislative measures to be taken up.
5. After the Bill becomes law, preparations for delimitation of constituencies and holding I elections to the State Legislature will be taken on hand when the President is satisfied that normalcy has been restored.

(Laldenga)

On behalf of Mizo National Front

(R.D. Pradhan)

Home Secretary, Government of India

(Lalkhama)

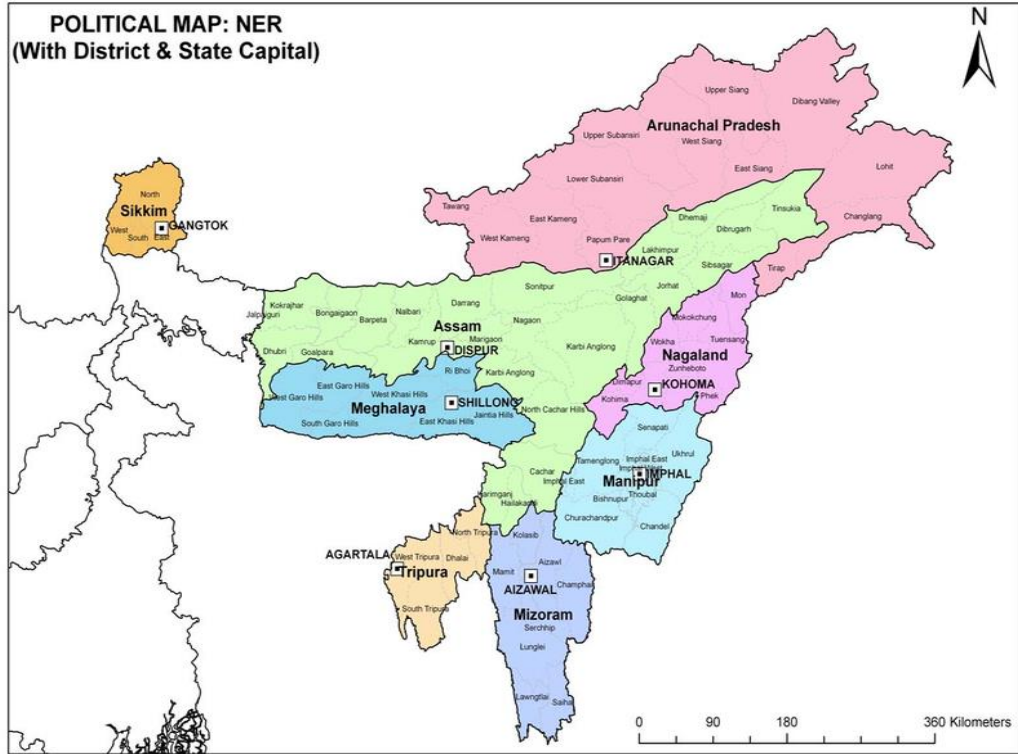
Chief Secretary, Government of Mizoram

Date: 30th June 1986

Place: New Delhi

Source: Anuradha Dutta and Ratna Bhuyan (eds.) *Genesis of Conflict and Peace: Understanding Northeast India Views & Reviews Vol. II* (New Delhi: Peace Studies OKDISCD & Akansha Publishing House, 2007).

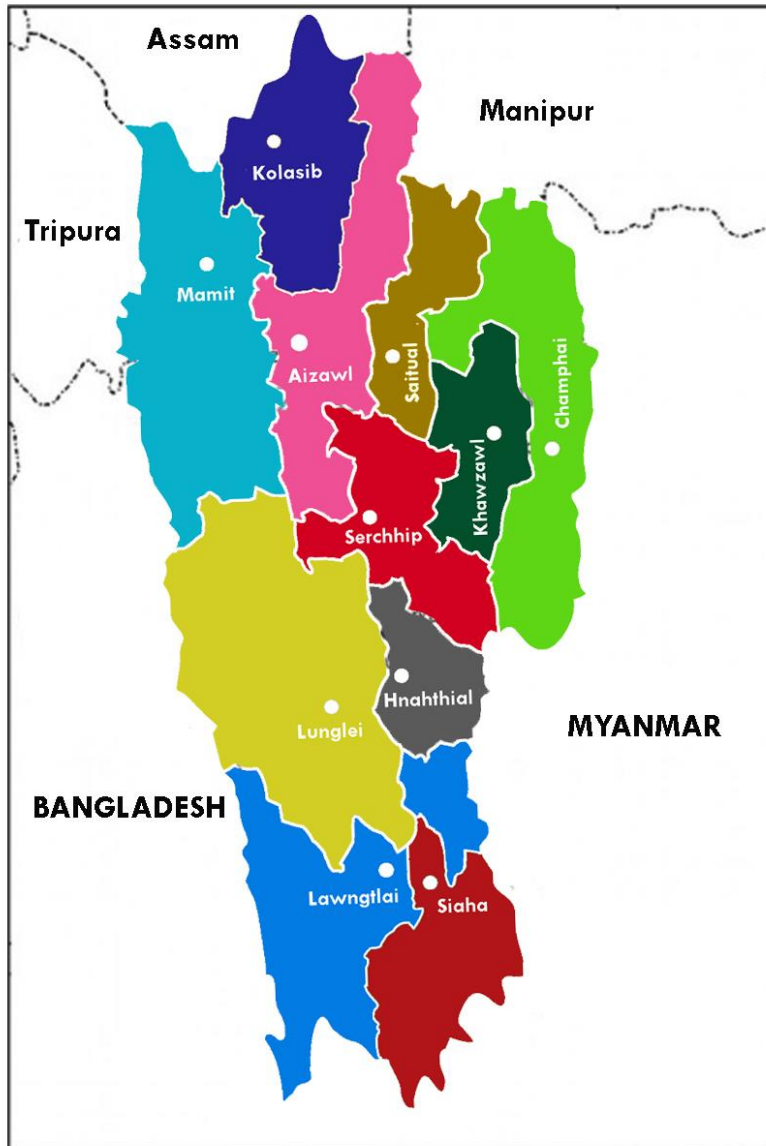
Appendix 5



Map not to be scaled.

Appendix 6

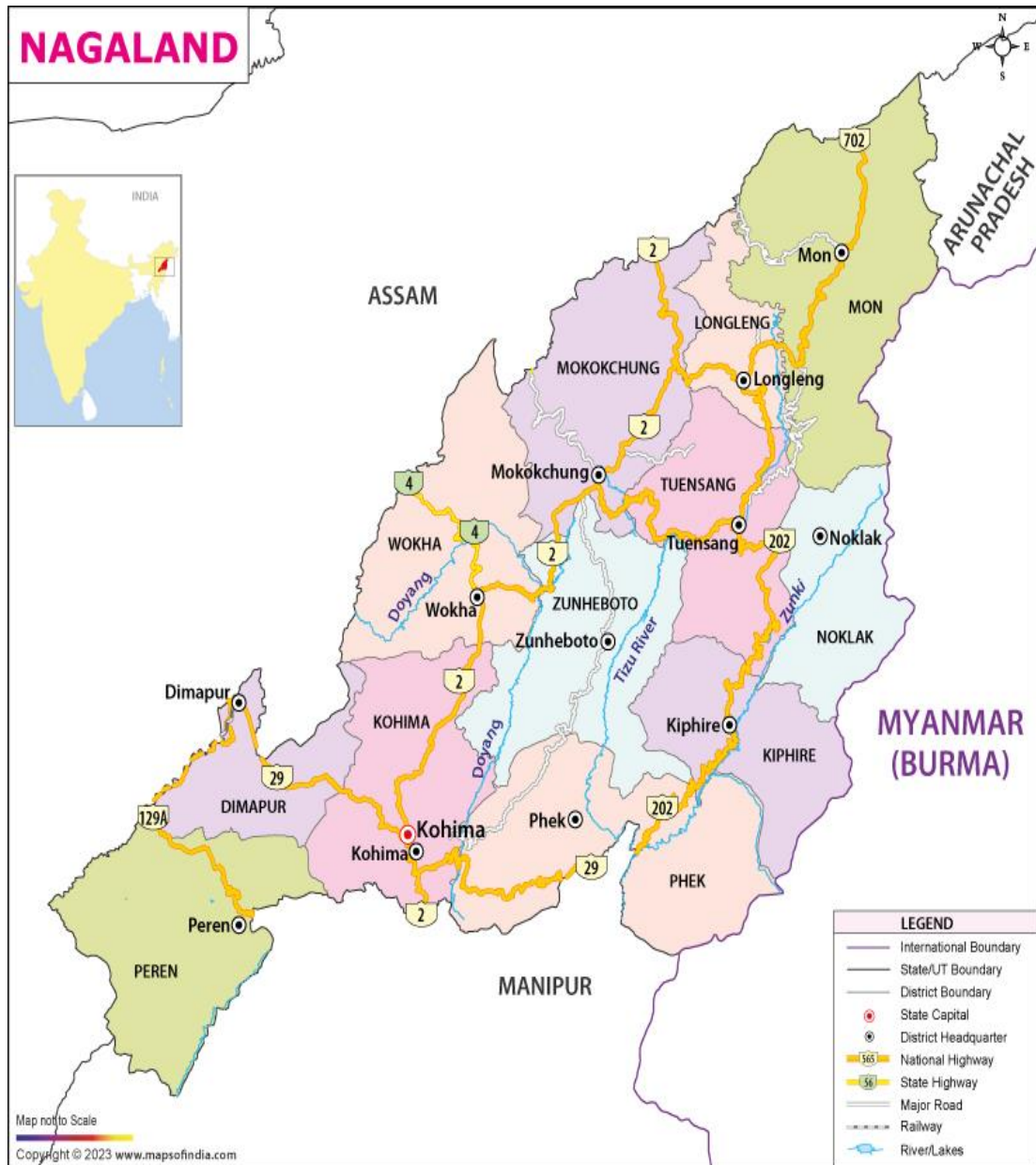
Political Map of Mizoram



Map by the author (Map not to be scaled)

Appendix 7

Political map of Nagaland



Map not to be scaled.

Appendix 8

Memorandum to the Simmon Commission Presented by the Naga Club on January
10, 1929.

MEMORANDUM TO THE SIMMON COMMISSION PRESENTED BY THE NAGA CLUB ON JANUARY 10, 1929

Sir,

We the undersigned Naga Club at Kohima who are the only persons at present who can choice for our people have heard with great regret that Naga Hills were included within the Reformed scheme of India without our knowledge, but as the administration of our hills continued to be in the hands of the British Officers we did not consider it necessary to raise any protest in the past. Now, we learn that you have come to India as representatives of the British Government to enquire into the working of the system of Government and the growth of the Education and we beg to submit below our view with the prayer that our Hills may be withdrawn from the Reformed Scheme and placed outside the Reforms but directly under the British Government. We never asked for any reforms and we do not wish any reforms.

Before the British Government conquered our country in 1879-80, we were living in a state of intermittent warfare with the Assamese of the Assam Valley to the North and West of our country and Manipuris in South. They never conquered us nor were we subjected to their rule. On the other hand, we were always a terror to these people. Our country within the administered area consists of more than eight tribes, quite deferent from one another with quite different languages, which cannot be understood by each other, and there are more tribes outside the administered area, which are not known at present. We have no unity among us and it is really the British Government that is holding us together now.

Our education at present is poor, the occupation of our Country by the British Government being so recent as 1880, we have had no chances or opportunity to improve in education and though we can boast of two or three graduates of an Indian University in our Country, we have not got one yet who is able to represent all our different tribe or master our language, much less one to represent us in any Council or Province. Moreover, our population numbering 1,02,000 is very small in comparison with the population of the plain districts in the Province, and any representation that may be allotted to us in the council will be negligible and will carry no weight whatsoever. Our language is quite different from those of the plains and we have no social affinities with Hindus or Muslims. We are looked down upon by the one for our beef and the other for our 'pork' and by both for our want in Education, which is not due to any fault of ours.

Our Country is poor and it does not pay for its administrations, we are afraid, that new and heavy taxes will have to be imposed on us when we cannot pay them all our land will have to be sold and in the long-run, we shall have no share in the land of our birth and life will not be worth living then. Though our land at present is within the British Territory. Government has always recognized our private rights in it. But if we are forced to enter the Council of the majority all these rights may be extinguished by an unsympathetic Council, the majority of whose number is sure to belong to the Plains district. We also have much fear the introduction offering laws and customs to supersede our own customary laws, which we now enjoy.

For the above reason, we pray that the British Government will continue to safeguard our rights against all encroachment from other people who are more advanced than us by withdrawn our Country from the Reforms scheme and placing it under its own protection. If the British Government, however, wants to throw us away, we pray that we should not be thrust to the mercy of the people who could never subjugate us. but to leave us alone to determine for ourselves as in ancient times. We claim not only the members of the Naga Club to represent all those regions to

which we belong viz., Angamis, Kacha Naga, Kukis, Semas, Lothas and Rengmas, but also regions of Nagaland.

Yours faithfully

1. Nihu Angami, Head Interpreter
2. Hesale Peshkar
3. Nisier Angami
4. Khosa Doctor
5. Gebo Kacha Naga, Interpreter
6. Vipunyu Angami Potdar
7. Goyuepra Angami, Treasurer
8. Ruzhukhrie Angami, Master
9. Dikhrie Angami, Sub-observer
10. Zepuzhulie Angami, Master
11. Zepulie Angami, Interpreter
12. Katsuno Angami, Interpreter
13. Nuolhoukielie Angami
14. Nizevi Sema, Interpreter
15. Apamo Lotha, Interpreter
16. Resile Rengma, Interpreter
17. Lengjang Kuki, Interpreter
18. Nikhriehu Angami, Interpreter
19. Miakrao Angami, Chaprasi
20. Levi Kacha Naga, Clerk

Appendix 9

Naga-Akbar Hydari Accord (Nine Point Agreement) Kohima, 26-28 June 1947

THE NINE-POINT HYDARI AGREEMENT

(The Nine-Point Agreement arrived at between the Naga National Council and the Governor of Assam, Sir Akabar Hydari in June 27-29, 1947)

Preamble

That the right of the Nagas to develop themselves according to their freely expressed wishes is recognised.

1. Judicial

All cases whether civil or criminal arising between Nagas in the Naga Hills will be disposed of by duly constituted Naga Courts according to Naga customary law or such law as may be introduced with the consent of duly recognised Naga representative organisations, save that where a sentence of transportation or death has been passed there will be right of appeal to the Governor.

In cases arising between Nagas and non-Nagas in (a) Kohima and Mokochehung town areas, and (b) in the neighbouring plains districts, the judge if not a Naga, will be assisted by the Naga assessor.

2. Executive

The general principle is accepted that what the Naga National Council is prepared to pay for, the Naga National Council should control. This principle will apply equally to the work done as well as the staff employed.

While the District Officer will be appointed at the discretion of the Governor, Sub-Divisions of the Naga Hills should be administered by a Sub-Divisional Council with a full time Executive President, paid by the Naga National

Council who would be responsible to the district Officer for all matters falling within the latter's responsibility, and to the Naga National Council for all matters falling within their responsibility in regard to:

- (a) Agriculture: The Naga National Council will exercise all the powers vested in the District Officer.
- (b) P.W.D.: The Naga National Council would take over full control.
- (c) Education and Forest Department: The N.N.C. is prepared to pay for all the services and staff.

3. Legislative

That no laws passed by the Provincial or Central Legislature which would materially affect the terms of this agreement or the religious practices of the Nagas shall have legal force in the Naga Hills without the consent of the Naga National Council.

In cases of disputes as to whether any law does so affect his agreement, the matter would be referred by the Naga National Council to the Governor who would then direct that the law in question should not have legal force in the Naga Hills pending the decision of the Central Government.

4. Land

That land with all its resources in the Naga hills should not be alienated to a non-Naga without the consent of the Naga National Council.

5. Taxation

That the Naga National Council will be responsible for the imposition, collection and expenditure of land revenue and house tax and of such other taxes as may be imposed by the Naga National Council.

6. Boundaries

That present administrative divisions should be modified so as:

-
- (1) to bring back into the Naga Hills District all the forests transferred to the Sibsagar and Nowgong Districts in the past, and
 - (2) to bring under one unified administrative unit as far as possible all Nagas, all the areas so included should be within the scope of the present proposed agreement. No areas should be transferred out of the Naga Hills without the consent of the Naga National Council.

7. Arms Act

The Deputy Commissioner will act on the advices of the Naga National Council in accordance with the provisions of the Arms Act.

8. Regulation

The Chin Hills Regulation and the Bengal Eastern Frontier regulations will remain in force.

9. Period of Agreement

The Governor of Assam as the Agent of the Government of the Indian Union will have special responsibility for a period of 10 (ten) years to ensure the due observance of this agreement, and at the end of this period the Naga National Council will be asked whether they require the above agreement to be extended for a further period or a new agreement regarding the future of the Naga people arrived at.

Appendix 10

The Sixteen- Point Agreement

THE SIXTEEN-POINT AGREEMENT

(The Sixteen-Point Agreement arrived at between the Naga Peoples' Convention and the Government of India in July 1960)

1. The Name

The Territories that were hitherto known as the Naga Hills Tuensang area under the NHTA Act, 1957, and any other Naga areas, which may hereafter come under it shall form a state within the Indian Union and be hereafter known as the Nagaland.

2. The Ministry-in-Charge

Nagaland shall be under the Ministry of External Affairs of the Government of India.

3. The Governor of Nagaland

- (a) The President of India shall appoint a Governor for Nagaland and he will be vested with the Executive powers of the Government of Nagaland. He will function from the Headquarters of the Nagaland.
- (b) His administrative secretariat will be headed by a Chief Secretary, stationed at the Headquarters with other Secretariat Staff as necessary.
- (c) The Governor shall have special responsibility with regard to Law, Order and Police during transitional period and for so long as the law and order situation continues to remain disturbed on account of hostile activities. In exercising this

special responsibility, the governor shall after consultation with the Ministry, act in his individual judgement. This special responsibility of the Governor will cease when normalcy returns.

4. Council of Ministers

(a) There shall be a Council of Ministers with a Chief Minister at the head to assist and advise the Governor in the exercise of his functions. (b) The Council of Ministers shall be responsible to the Naga Legislative Assembly.

5. The Legislature

There shall be a constituted Legislative Assembly consisting of elected and nominated members as may be deemed necessary representing different Tribes (Further, a duly constituted body of Experts may be formed to examine and determine the principles of representation on democratic basis).

6. Representation in the Parliament

Two elected members shall represent Nagaland in the Union Parliament, i.e. one in the Lok Sabha and one in the Rajya Sabha.

7. Acts of Parliament

No Acts or Law passed by the Union Parliament affecting the following provisions shall have legal force in Nagaland unless specifically applied to it by a majority vote of the Naga Legislative Assembly.

- (i) The religious or Social Practices of the Nagas;
- (ii) Naga Customary Laws and Procedure;
- (iii) Civil and Criminal justice so far as these concern decisions according to Naga Customary Laws. The existing laws relating to administration of civil and criminal justice as provided in the rules for the administration of justice and police in the Naga Hills district shall continue to be in force, and
- (iv) The ownership and transfer of land and its resources.

8. Local Self-Government

Each tribe shall have the following Units of Law-making and administrative Local Bodies to deal with matters concerning the respective tribes and areas—

1. The Village Council
2. The Range Council
3. The Tribal Council

These Councils will also deal with disputes and cases involving breaches of Customary Laws and Usages.

9. Administration of Justice

- (a) The existing systems of administration of civil and criminal justice shall continue.
- (b) Appellate Courts:
 - (1) The District-*cum*-Session Court for each district), High Court and Supreme Court of India.
 - (2) The Naga Tribunal (for the whole of the Nagaland) in respect of cases decided according to Customary Laws.

10. Administration of Tuensang District

- (1) The Governor shall carry on the administration of the Tuensang District for a period of 10 (ten) years until such time when the tribes in the Tuensang district are capable of shouldering more responsibilities of the advanced system of administration. The commencement of ten-year period of administration will start simultaneously with the enforcement of detailed workings of the constitution in the other parts of Nagaland.
- (2) Provided further that Regional Council shall be formed for Tuensang District by elected representatives from all the tribes in Tuensang district, and the Governor may nominate representatives to the Regional Council as well.

The Deputy Commissioner will be the Ex-Officio Chairman of the Council. The Regional Council will elect members to the Naga Legislative Assembly to represent Tuensang District.

- (3) Provided further that on the advice of the Regional Council, steps will be taken to start various Councils and Courts, in those areas where the people feel themselves capable of establishing such institutions.
- (4) Provided further that no Act or Laws passed by the Naga Legislative Assembly shall be applicable to Tuensang district unless specifically recommended by the Regional Council.
- (5) Provided further that the Regional Council shall supervise and guide the various Councils and Courts within Tuensang District, and wherever deemed necessary depute the Local Officers to act as Chairman thereof.
- (6) Provided further that Councils of such areas inhabited by a mixed population or which have not as yet decided to which specific Tribal Council to be affiliated to, shall be directly under the Regional Council for the time being. And at the end of ten years the situation will be reviewed and if the people so desire the period will be further extended.

11. Financial Assistance from the Government of India

To supplement the revenues of the Nagaland there will be a need for the Government of India to pay out of the consolidated fund of India as Grants-in-aid as follows:

- (1) Lump-sum as may be necessary each year for the development programme in the Nagaland; and
- (2) A fixed recurring sum (Annual Subvention) for meeting the cost of the administration of the Nagaland.

12. Consolidation of Forest Areas

The delegation wished the following to be placed on records:

The Naga delegation discussed the question of the inclusion of the reserved forests and of contiguous areas inhabited by the Nagas. They were referred to the provision in Articles 3 and 4 of the Constitution, prescribing the procedure of the transfer of areas from one state to another.

13. Consolidation of Contiguous Naga Area

The delegation wished the following to be placed on records:

The Naga leaders expressed the wish for the contiguous areas to join the new state. It was pointed out to them on behalf of the Government of India the Articles 3 and 4 of the Constitution provided for increasing the areas of any state, but that it was not possible for the government of India to make any commitment in this regard at this stage.

14. Formation of Separate Naga Regiment

In order that the Naga people can fulfil their desire of playing a full role in the defence forces of India, the question of raising a separate Naga Regiment should be duly examined for action.

15. Transitional Period

- (a) On reaching the political settlement with Government of India, the Government of India will prepare a Bill for such amendment of the constitution as may be necessary, in order to implement the decision. The draft Bill, before presentation to Parliament, will be shown to the delegates of the NPC.
- (b) There shall be constituted an Interim Body with elected representatives from every tribe to assist and advise the governor in the administration of the Nagaland during the transitional period. The tenure of office of the members of the Interim Body will be 3 (three) years subject to re-election.

16. Inner Line Regulation

The Rules embodied in the Bengal Eastern Frontier Regulation, 1873, shall remain in force in Nagaland.

Appendix 11

Nagaland Peace Mission's Proposal

NAGALAND PEACE MISSION'S PROPOSAL

During the recess, after the ninth round of Indo-Naga peace talks, the Nagaland Peace Mission came forward with a new proposal on 20th December, 1964 for consideration of both Indian and Naga delegation. The Proposal reads:

1. It has been a matter of considerable satisfaction to the Peace Mission, as to all others in Nagaland and in the rest of India, that since firing ceased on 6th September 1964, for the first time in ten years people in Nagaland are experiencing what normalcy is. The Peace Mission feels that it is the moral obligation of everyone in Nagaland and, more so, of the Peace Mission in which so much confidence and faith have been reposed, to see that this peace become everlasting in Nagaland. It is in pursuance of this that the Peace Mission is addressing this communication to both the parties.
2. But first it should be placed on records to the honour of both parties that are in conflict that the attempt to find peace and agreement to a ceasefire was an adventurous step which issued from their deep desire to find an honourable way to terminate such a bitter, wasteful and protracted conflict.
3. The marked difference in the atmosphere that prevails in Nagaland today as compared with the prevailing prior to the cessation of operation will probably be only realised by those who lived or worked in Nagaland where there was, as soon as darkness began, a sense of insecurity resulting

from the ever present possibility of sudden violence. Today, the people are returning to their normal occupations. Families are being reunited, the biggest harvest for many years has been gathered and there is a feeling of hope in Nagaland which makes every delegate engaged in the peace talks only too conscious of the heavy burden of decision on those who have to take it, the life and happiness of so many human beings being dependent on the decisions that are taken. In all this, it is fair to pay tributes not only to the Government of India for their humanity and imagination, but also to the leaders of the Baptist Church for whom this initiative was the result of much thought and powerful consideration of the good of both India and Nagaland.

4. The Nagaland peace talks, which started on 23rd September 1964, have now come to a stage, where the NFG delegation have placed their demands for consideration by the government of India. This was in response to the statement of the leader of the Government of India delegation of Chedema on 14th November, wherein the Government of India also stated their position and understanding of the problems, as they saw it.
5. The Nagaland Federal delegation have claimed that Nagaland had never been conquered by the Indian army or ruled by an Indian Government, although their territory had been forcibly annexed by the British army and the British Government about a century ago. Nevertheless, their right of self-determination they claim belonged to them separately as a people from the sovereign independent state of India, and they are now demanding recognition of their independence which, they say, India herself demanded and heroically struggle for under the historic slogan of Swaraj.
6. The Government of India's position on the other hand, is that Nagaland formed an integral part of

India before 1947 and that, with the transfer of power to India by the British parliament, Nagaland became a part of India in the same way as all other states in India. At the same time, the Government of India claimed that they already accepted the need for granting the fullest autonomy to Nagaland by constituting the state of Nagaland so as to ensure the fullest development of the Nagas and to guarantee their separate ethnic and cultural entity and to ensure their traditional right and their resources accordingly; the Nagas are not ruled by any alien power but are ruling themselves.

7. The Peace Mission notes that a section of the Naga people accepted the status of statehood thus conferred upon Nagaland as being in their best interest. Another section did not consider that if satisfied the aims and objectives they had been fighting for. Thus, there are these two divergent positions of the Government of India and the NFG confronting each other.
8. Though the positions appear to be far apart, the Peace Mission believes that, with goodwill and understanding on both sides, a solution acceptable to both can be found.
9. As earlier stated, the Peace Mission reiterates that it is under an inescapable obligation to ensure maintenance of peace and settlement of all outstanding problems through peaceful means. The Peace Mission believes that there is no human problem that cannot be solved by peaceful means. The Peace Mission further believes that the Government concerned and the people concerned share and subscribe to this view.
10. While the Peace Mission fully agrees and endorses the principle that all subject peoples have the right to self-determination and that no group of people is competent to rule over another, it also has to invite the attention of the Nagaland.

Federal government to certain historical processes that have taken place to give birth to the Union of India and to the emergence of the great concepts and the ideals underlying the Union constitution.

11. The British had conquered at several stages and in diverse manner, various parts of the Indian sub-continent comprising different ethnic groups, political systems and religious beliefs. However, under the aegis of the Indian National Congress and since 1920, under the leadership of Mahatma Gandhi, these various ethnic and religious elements came together against foreign colonial rule and develop a consciousness of nationhood. Unfortunately, this common struggle against foreign imperialism that has welded these diverse people in the Indian sub-continent into one nation, did not some how have an appreciable impact on the Nagas. This was, no doubt, due to the policy of isolation and exclusion, so deftly practised by the British rulers, who believed in creating pockets contrary to each other and hoping to rule in perpetuity by dividing the peoples. In any case, this great national movement of unification, which freed India including Nagaland from the Yoke of foreign rule, did not bring within its embracing sweep the Naga population to the same extent as it did the other parts of the sub-continent. Thus in 1947, when all the diverse people of India who had been brought under British rule, voluntarily agreed to form the Union of India and to share in the common endeavour to ensure that in this great Union the ideals of fraternity, liberty, justice and equality, as enshrined in the constitution are full achieved, for the common benefit of all, the same reasons and the sense of participation was not noticeable in the Naga areas.

12. The Peace Mission, in the circumstances, appreciates and understands their urge to preserve their integrity. The Peace Mission also appreciates the courage and tenacity displayed by the Naga

people in their endeavour to achieve this goal. The objective which they may have placed before themselves in their memorandum "Naga Peace Delegation", dated 17 December 1864 and addressed to the Peace Mission, namely, their desire to find peace, their resolve to maintain their integrity and to resist entanglement in war, all extremely laudable and should commend themselves to all peace loving people. It is, however, to be noted that this Declaration, in itself, does not resolve the political issue. Therefore, some appropriate meeting point has to be found, where the aims and ideals of the NFG can be achieved, at the same time making it possible for the Government of India to accept these within the framework of the political settlement to be mutually agreed upon.

13. The Peace Mission in the pursuit of a settlement through peaceful means, to which the Government of India as well as the NFG to consider seriously whether such meeting point could not be reached. On the other hand, then NFG could on their own volition, decide to be a participant in the Union of India and mutually settle the terms and conditions for the purpose. On the other hand, the Government of India could consider to what extent the pattern and structure of the relationship between Nagaland and the Government of India should be adopted and recast, so as to satisfy the political aspirations of all sections of Naga opinion and to make possible for the ideals of peace as expressed in the Naga Peace Declaration to be substantially realised.
 14. The Peace Mission would like, in all earnestness, to impress upon both sides that the approach, herein suggested, is not only the fairest, but the only practical one in the given circumstances; and it fervently hopes that it will commend itself to the Government of India as well as to the Nagaland Federal Government.
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15. The Peace Mission reiterates that the peace now obtaining in Nalgaland should be made everlasting. With that object in view, the Peace Mission offered certain suggestions, whereupon both the parties had unequivocally affirmed and declared that they would renounced war and violence as a means for political settlement. This declaration of renunciation of war and use of armed forces, it is earnestly emphasised, most not be deviated from by any means. The Peace Mission's proposal following this bilateral Declaration of Renunciation of war, to deposit all underground arms in safe custody and to withdraw all Indian security forces from law and order duties could not unfortunately be implemented.
 16. Nevertheless, the Peace Mission would earnestly desires that, in faithful pursuance of the Declaration of Renunciation of use of armed forces, both parties take concrete steps to remove all frictions. There have been numerous complaints and counter-complaints from both. The Peace Mission would suggest that the NFG require all arms issued to its force to be concentrated at one or several places. in their armouries and under their custody so that there can be no basis of any future complaints of their forces parading with arms or extorting money or supplies under threat. They should also seriously ask themselves whether the recruiting and movements out of Nagaland towards Pakistan do not create an impression that these are only acts preparatory towards resumption of hostilities and, if so, they should take remedial measures by putting a stop to such recruitment and movement. The Government of India should instruct its armed forces and the civil administration to continue to abide strictly by the terms of the Agreement, both in spirit and letter.
 17. The Peace Mission makes a fervent appeal for

Appendix 12

The Shillong Accord, 1975

THE SHILLONG ACCORD, 1975

The Shillong Accord of 11th November, 1975 between the Government of India and the Underground Nagas

1. The following representatives of the underground organisations met the Governor of Nagaland, Shri L.P. Singh, representing the Government of India at Shillong on 10th and 11th November, 1975:

- (1) Shri I. Temjenba
- (2) Shri S. Dahru
- (3) Shri Venyiyi Rhkhu
- (4) Shri Z. Ramyo
- (5) Shri M. Assa
- (6) Shri Kevi Yallay

2. There was a series of four discussions. Some of the discussions were held with the Governor alone, at others, the Governor was assisted by the two Advisers for Nagaland, Shin M. Ramuny and Shin H. Zopianga, and Shri M.I. Kampani, Joint Secretary in the Ministry of Home Affairs. All the five members of the Liaison Committee, namely, Rev. Longri Ao, Dr. M. Aram, Shri L. Lungalang, Shri Kenneth Kerhuo and Shri Lungshim Shaiza, participated in the discussions.

3. The following were the outcome of the discussions:

- (i) The representatives of the underground organisations conveyed their decision, of their own volition, to accept, without condition, the Constitution of India;

Appendix 13

The 1997 Ceasefire Agreement between the Government of India and the NSCN

AGREED GROUND RULES FOR CEASE-FIRE FINALISED BETWEEN THE GOVERNMENT OF INDIA AND THE NATIONAL SOCIALIST COUNCIL OF NAGALAND (NSCN) ON 12TH DECEMBER 1997

In pursuance of the cease-fire as originally agreed to on 25th July 1997 and its further extension on 25th October 1997 for the period of three months, discussions were held between the representatives of the government of India led by Shri K. Padmanabhaiah and the National Socialist Council of Nagaland led by Mr V.S. Atem, to finalise the ground rules and modalities for the implementation of the cease-fire with the view of ensuring continuance of an effective cease-fire to pave the way for a peaceful and meaningful political dialogue. After exchanging views in context of the experience of the first three months of the cease-fire, both sides agreed to undertake steps for effective and unambiguous implementation of the cease-fire to create a proper and conducive atmosphere for further discussions. It was mutually agreed that during the period of cease-fire:

- (a) There would be no offensive operations like ambush, raid and attack leading to death/injuries/ damage or loss of property against the NSCN by the Indian army, paramilitary forces and the police;
- (b) Patrolling by the Indian army, paramilitary forces and the police would continue to prevent infiltration of militants and arms as hitherto fore. However, patrolling within one kilometre of NSCN designated camps, decided after due consultation in the monitoring mechanism, will be

-
- carried out with intimation to them. It is noted that no such camps are located/will be located in urban areas, and/or near highways;
- (c) Protection of convoys and patrolling of roads would continue to be undertaken by the Indian army paramilitary forces and the police;
 - (d) The Indian army, paramilitary forces and the police would issue instruction to their formation, not to use masks to cover their faces, during the period of cease-fire;
 - (e) The NSCN would not undertake offensive operations like ambush, raid, snipping and attack leading to death/injury/damage or loss of property;
 - (f) In the interest of promoting peace process, there would be no parading (either in groups of individually) of NSCN cadres in uniform and/or with arms. For the present, this would cover towns including District Headquarters, Public transports, Highways and such EAC headquarters and other areas as may be mutually agreed upon by the joint monitoring mechanism;
 - (g) There would be no blocked of roads and communications, disruption of economic or developmental activities as well as essential services by the NSCN;
 - (h) It is mutually agreed that no safe haven or sanctuary to any armed groups or elements will be provided by any one to ensure that the cease-fire conditions were not misutilised;
 - (i) On the Government of India side, a concern was expressed that forcible collection of money or essential supplies and intimidation of individuals including Government Officials were taking place in the state. The NSCN representatives stated that theirs being a peoples' organisation, they did resort to such activities. However, in view of the concern expressed by the government of India and in the interest to promoting the peace process, the NSCN representatives agreed that the above

activities would be prevented;

- (j) It was further agreed that implementation of these ground rules and modalities will be monitored by a group constituted for this purpose comprising of the representatives of NSCN, NGOs and representatives nominated by the Government of India. However, it was also agreed that any accidental encounter or violation should not be allowed to jeopardise the peace process and the effect of any such incident should be localised through mutual consultation. All cases of violation of these ground rules would be referred to the Monitoring group, so that the reasons for violations are identified and steps to be taken to prevent such violations in future are suggested. Notwithstanding the above, the army, the paramilitary forces and the police will act in an impartial and unbiased manner against any group causing public disturbance or when there is immanent danger to public safety or peace.
- (k) On the government of India side, a concern was expressed about reports of forced recruitment to armed cadres. The NSCN representatives stated that they have not and do not resort to forced recruitment. However, in the interest of promoting the peace process, it was agreed that if there are any reports of forced recruitment, they should be discussed in the Monitoring group.

Appendix 14

Some of the pictures taken during the research field work in Mizoram and Nagaland



Interview of Pu L. R Dingliana, former Deputy Chairman, Lai Autonomous District Council, Lawngtlai. Interviewed on 28th January, 2020 at the Office of Lai Autonomous District Council, Lawngtlai.



Interview of Pu C. L. Ruala, Former Minister, Government of Mizoram, Former Member of Parliament (Lok Sabha) and senior Congress Leader. Interviewed on 4th December, 2020 at his residence in Tuikhuahtlang, Aizawl.



Interview of Pu Rualchhina, Former Minister, Government of Mizoram senior MNF Leader and the then member of Mizo National Army (MNA). Interviewed on 8th December, 2020 at his residence in Luangmual, Aizawl.



Interview of Pu C. Zama, member of the then Mizo National Army. Interviewed on 8th December, 2020 at his residence in Chawnpui, Aizawl.



Interview of Dr. Neikiesalie Nicky Kire, MLA, Nationalist Democratic Progressive Party (NDPP), Kohima. Interviewed on 7th December, 2021 at his residence in Kohima, Nagaland.



Interview of Dr. Shurhozilie Liezietsu, Former Chief Minister of Nagaland and President of Naga People's Front, Kohima. Interviewed on 8th December, 2021 at his residence in Kohima, Nagaland.



Interview of Rev. Vikuo Rhi, Youth Secretary, Nagaland Baptist Church Council (NBCC). Interviewed on 8th December, 2021 at the Headquarter of NBCC, Kohima, Nagaland.



Interview of Dr. Kuhoi Zhimomi, Former Registrar of Nagaland University, Dimapur. Interviewed on 9th December, 2021 at his residence in Dimapur, Nagaland.



Interview of Mr. Khewekhapse Therie, President, Nagaland Pradesh Congress Committee, Dimapur. Interviewed on 9th December, 2021 at his residence in Dimapur, Nagaland.



Interview of Dr. S.C. Jamir, Former Chief Minister of Nagaland, Ex- Member of Parliament (Lok Sabha), Former Governor of Goa, Maharashtra, Gujarat and Odisha.

Interviewed on 9th December, 2021 at his residence in Dimapur, Nagaland.



Interview of Shri Chingwang Konyak, President, Nationalist Democratic Progressive Party (NDPP), Former Minister in the Government of Nagaland and Former Member of the Parliament (Lok Sabha). Interviewed on 9th December, 2021 at his residence

in Dimapur, Nagaland.



Interview of Mr. Wanguh Konyak, Former Member of the Parliament (Lok Sabha), and Senior Party Leader of the Naga People's Front, Dimapur. Interviewed on 10th December, 2021 at his residence in Dimapur, Nagaland.



Interview of Joseph Lalhmingthanga, General Secretary, Central Young Lai Association, Lawngtlai. Interviewed on 25th November, 2022 at the Guest House, Mizoram University, Aizawl.



Interview of Prof. J. V. Hluna, Ex- MLA of PC Party, Ex- President of Mizoram BJP. Interviewed on 7th December, 2022 at his residence in Sikulpuikawn, Aizawl.



Interview of Pu Vanupa Zathang, IPS (Rtd), Chairman, Central Scheme Monitoring & Publicity, BJP Mizoram. Interviewed on 7th December, 2022 at the Headquarters of the BJP, Upper Republic, Aizawl.

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13. Dr. K. Nishena Nekha, Principal, Government Zunheboto College, Nagaland. Telephone interviewed on 12th December, 2022 in Kohima, Nagaland.
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: Identity Politics in North East India: A
Comparative Study of the Role of
Political Parties in Mizoram and
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ABSTRACT

**IDENTITY POLITICS IN NORTH EAST INDIA: A
COMPARATIVE STUDY OF THE ROLE OF POLITICAL
PARTIES IN MIZORAM AND NAGALAND**

**A THESIS SUBMITTED IN PARTIAL FULFILLMENT OF THE
REQUIREMENTS FOR THE DEGREE OF DOCTOR OF
PHILOSOPHY**

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DEPARTMENT OF POLITICAL SCIENCE

SCHOOL OF SOCIAL SCIENCES

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ABSTRACT

**IDENTITY POLITICS IN NORTH EAST INDIA: A COMPARATIVE STUDY
OF THE ROLE OF POLITICAL PARTIES IN MIZORAM AND NAGALAND**

BY

F. Lalramhluni

Department of Political Science

Supervisor: Dr. Suwa Lal Jangu

Joint Supervisor: Prof. L. H. Chhuanawma

Submitted

**In partial fulfilment of the requirement of the degree of Doctor of Philosophy
in Political Science of Mizoram University, Aizawl**

The thesis focuses on the concept of identity politics in North East India, and the role played by political parties in shaping the identity politics in a comparative study in Mizoram and Nagaland. Mizoram and Nagaland have been chosen due to the fact that the formation of these states is done with the political agreement which is listed in Article 371 of the Indian Constitution. Both states are carved out from Assam on the basis of their respective ethnic identity. This study is a comparative study of political parties in the formation of identity politics in general north east India, in particular Mizoram and Nagaland. The study undertakes the theoretical and instrumental role of political parties in the formation of identity politics and political developments in these two states.

There are four main theoretical approaches to the study of ethnicity. These are primordialism, instrumentalism, materialism, and constructionism. These approaches include how to integrate the social and psychological dimensions of ethnic identity and the relationship between the state and ethnicity. Till the 1970s, the primordial approach which views ethnic identity as innate, fixed and permanent. They claimed that each individual is born into an ethnic group or 'tribe', that is perceived as culturally defined units. The instrumentalist approach challenged the primordial belief that ethnic groups were distinct bounded units with innate cultural characteristics, suggesting that individuals selectively emphasize those forms of cultural differentiation that are important to them. Moreover, the cultural features are not fixed, they are situationally defined. Materialist approach to ethnicity views ethnicity as a result of class relations, and they are underdeveloped in the literatures of Marxist theories. The constructionist approach believes that ethnicity is socially constructed, and is done so continuously through social interaction, by both elites and ordinary people. Ethnic identity is constructed in the form of literature, deviating from instrumentalist approach, by individuals, by discourse, and by broad social, political and economic forces.

Scope of the Study

The study focuses on identity politics and the role played by political parties in the identity formation in Mizoram and Nagaland. Both national parties and regional parties in these two states are analyzed in the research. It also focuses on the strategies and policies of political parties in promoting identity politics and the role of insurgency in promoting ethnicity and ethnic nationalism. The study opens the scope for further research in the area of insurgency, identity politics, peace and stability in the north eastern states. A comparative study approach is an important tool in analyzing the political developments in a state by comparing one variable with another one.

Limitation of the Research

Limitations and problems that occur during the research are language barriers and geographical barriers. In course of acquiring proper and authentic information, language and social barriers limit the research study. There are physical difficulty and time factor in reaching out and approach to relevant persons and respondents. Many other factors as time, place and accessibility of relevant data, document and person for carrying out the research thoroughly within and outside Mizoram and Nagaland. The difficulties in physical accessibilities of written works, lack of proper documentations and office-records limit the research study. The Covid- 19 lockdown and the army shootout in Mon district in Nagaland during December, 2021 slowed down the field work. Choosing respondents for sample size and their availability based on quality and rationality are the limitations in this research.

Research Gap

The notion of identity and ethnicity are inter-related in discussing the politics in North East India, and it requires new study in the present context of the state politics. In-depth analysis on the role of political parties in north east states towards

identity politics, politics of insurgency and electoral politics is missing in the existing literature.

Objectives of the Study

- I. To trace the origin of identity politics in Mizoram and Nagaland.
- II. To study the emergence of different political parties which are founded on the issues of cultural and historical ethnic identities.
- III. To study the role between regional parties and national parties in managing national and regional interests in Mizoram and Nagaland.
- IV. To study the role of insurgency and its influence on political parties in Mizoram and Nagaland.
- V. To analyze the implication of the electoral performance of the political parties in political stability and political developments in Mizoram and Nagaland.

Research Questions

- I. What is the historical background of identity politics in Northeast India with special reference to Mizoram and Nagaland?
- II. What role does identity politics play in the formation of political parties in Northeast India with special reference to Mizoram and Nagaland?
- III. What is the role of national and regional parties in managing the national and regional interests?
- IV. How does insurgency have impact upon political parties and identity politics in Mizoram and Nagaland?
- V. What are the implications of electoral performance of political parties for political stability and developments in Mizoram and Nagaland?

Methodology

The study of this research is empirical and comparative in nature. It seeks to study the role of political parties in the formation of identity politics in Mizoram and Nagaland. The study is based on inter-disciplinary approach. Both qualitative and quantitative methods are applied in this research. As various variables like political parties, political institutions, and socio- economic environments are determined the dynamics and developments of ethnic identity and political activities in Mizoram and Nagaland. These variables are of inter-disciplinary in nature. Historical views were taken through in-personal interviews. A comparative study is applied in order to answer of questions related to the historical and comparative perspectives of the study. In answering the research questions and getting information and data related to the historical developments are collected through both primary and secondary sources. Content analysis of historical documents, Memorandum of Understanding (MoUs) and media reports about political developments in Mizoram and Nagaland. Academic discussions, opinions and perceptions of people that belong to political parties, institutions and community organizations are used in this study.

Interview scheduled is used for this research. The selection of respondents is based on the purposive sample tool to obtaining the primary information and data. Sixteen personal interviews with leaders of political parties and prominent citizens associated with NGOs and Civil Society organization were conducted. A list of interviews with leaders & office bearers of political in Mizoram and Nagaland is attached in the appendix. The details of interviews are given in the respective chapter discussion. The opinions of academicians and researchers from Mizoram University, Nagaland University and Indian Council of World Affairs (ICWA), New Delhi. Views of Editor NEZINE Guwahati, Editor of the Shillong Times, Editor of Nagaland Page, Editor of the Frontier Despatch are also taken in to an account for this research.

Election Data from the Election Commission of India, State Election agency, CSDS Data banks, election manifestos and pamphlets of political parties are used as primary sources to analyzed research objectives. Secondary sources as, libraries,

books, journals, newspapers and periodicals and news bulletins from internet sources are used in the research.

Chapterization

There are five main chapters and concluding chapter in the thesis.

Chapter I- Introduction chapter includes introduction of the study, conceptual framework of identity politics, political parties and role of political parties in shaping identity politics in Mizoram and Nagaland, the geo- politics of the study areas, methodology of the research topics. It presents the conceptual framework of the study area; it also includes the definitional and theoretical aspects of the identity politics. Theoretical explanation of identity, politics, political party are discussed thoroughly in this chapter. Theoretical explanations are given using the concepts coined by scholars like Erik H. Erikson, Benedict Anderson, Lalsangkima Pachuau, James C. Scott, T. K. Oommen, Robert Wuthnow are analyzed and blending with identity politics in Indian state. On the concept of political parties, definitions of political parties by Maurice Duverger, MacIver have been explained. The thesis also discusses the origin of political parties which can be traced to the Tudor period in England between 1495- 1603 AD, in which the Puritans organized themselves as groups for opposing some of the policy of Queen Elizabeth- I. The Long Parliament in 1640 called by King Charles- I got divided into two groups known as the Cavaliers or the Royalists, who supported the then role of the Monarchy; and the Round- heads or Parliamentarians, who supported the need to reduce the royal authority and the increased role of the Parliament.

The thesis highlights the starting of party system in India and the characteristics of the Indian party system with the Congress Party dominating it till the 1977. The rise of regional and state parties and their increasing importance at the national level was seen from the late 1990s and the early 2000 witness the emerging growth of right-wing party. Since 2014, the BJP domination of Indian politics both at the national and state level has increased tremendously. Many regional political parties have formed the alliances with the BJP. As MNF in Mizoram and NDPP in

Nagaland are members of BJP lead NEDA and NDA. At the same time, the rise of low castes, religious identities and linguistics groups have contributed to the dominant nature of identity politics. 30 literature reviews ranging from the issue of nationalism, identity, political party, identity politics and the historical development of politics in the north east India as a whole, Mizoram and Nagaland have been done in the first chapter.

Chapter II: Mizoram and Nagaland: An Ethno- Political Overview

The chapter presents an over-view of the ethno-politics, its origin and historical development in Mizoram and Nagaland. It focusses on ethnic and historical formations, starting from the pre-colonial era, colonial era, after independence and the evolution of state formation of the two mentioned states. Both states are perfect example of ethno-politics. The descriptive analysis method is applied in this chapter.

Chapter III: Evolution of Political Parties in Mizoram and Nagaland

This chapter focus around in the genesis of the formation of political parties in the two states, the basis of identity politics and the role played by the political parties in promoting the ethnic identity. In Mizoram, historical developments political parties of Mizo Union, The UMFO, Pawi Lakher Tribal Union, Mara Freedom Party, The MNF, the Congress, the PC Party, ZNP, BJP and ZPM are done and their role in promoting ethnic identity. At the same time, genesis of political parties in Nagaland such as the NNC, NNO, Democratic Party, United Front of Nagaland, Naga People's Front, The INC, the NDPP and the BJP are studied. The historical and comparative analytical methods are used in the study of evolution of political parties in both states.

Chapter IV: Role of Insurgency in Identity Politics

The chapter deals with the concept of insurgency and the political upheaval in shaping the identity politics in Mizoram and Nagaland; since insurgency has played a big role in the political development in the two states. The meaning of insurgency, historical development of insurgent movement and its impact towards political development, the issue of identity politics and the role in insurgency is dealing in this chapter. The methodology adopted in this chapter besides secondary source is largely based on both secondary sources and personal interviews of various political leaders and prominent citizens in these two states. The social science method is exercised in the content analysis of the chapter.

Chapter V: Electoral Performance of Political Parties in Mizoram and Nagaland

The chapter examines electoral performance of political parties in Mizoram and Nagaland. It includes a comprehensive and comparative study of National versus State parties. The chapter explores the role of political parties in bring political stability and political development in the region. Analysis of the manifestos of political parties in the State Legislative Assembly Elections is included in the chapter. A mixed of semi-quantitative and qualitative methods are applied in the analysis of the electoral performance of political parties in both states.

Chapter VI: Conclusion

The last chapter examines the changing trends of the political parties and political developments. This concluding chapter is an analytical summing up interpretation of all the previous chapters and the findings of the research. The chapter also contains the observations and suggestions along with concluding the research work.

Research question number one- what is historical background of identity politics in Northeast India with special reference to Mizoram and Nagaland? This is

answered as the legacy of the colonial rule and their various administrative policies that were introduced at the hill districts of Assam.

Research question number two- What role does identity politics play in the formation of political parties in Northeast India with special reference to Mizoram and Nagaland? This is answered as the birth of political parties are mainly because of political awareness developed among the educated masses due to western education, dissatisfaction towards the then Assam government administration and to uphold the ethnic identity of the tribals, identity politics was not the sole issue of the formation of political parties. The sole agenda of ethnic identity or political party formation based solely on ethnic lines is not the genesis of the formation of political parties in these two states.

Research question number three- What is the role of national and regional parties in managing the national and regional interests? This is answered as the role played by political parties in managing the national and regional interest depends upon the need of the people and the need of the hour. This could be answered from analyzing the election manifestos of political parties in Mizoram and Nagaland. None of the political parties made the necessary structural transformation in the economic system as the basis for electoral appeal. There is not much difference in terms of ideology between national and state parties in both Mizoram and Nagaland, manifestos are made and design to suit the regional and sub- regional demands of the time. And much of the promise highlighted in the manifestos are not fulfilled by which ever party that came into power.

Research question number four- How does insurgency have impact upon political parties and identity politics in Mizoram and Nagaland? This is answered as insurgency had occurred because of lack of development and this led to re- assertion of identity politics. Therefore, insurgent groups like the NNC, NSCN and MNF in Mizoram and Nagaland have used insurgency as a political tool to gain more autonomy and used identity issue (in the form of Greater Mizoram and Nagalim) to gain the support of the masses. Political parties that have come up in the two states whether they are regional or national parties, more or less have the same stand on the issue of identity politics and assert upon political solution.

Research question number five- What are the implications of electoral performance of political parties for political stability and developments in Mizoram and Nagaland? This is answered by analyzing the perspective of insurgency in Mizoram and Nagaland, political parties have contributed towards the formation of statehood. Ethnic identity assertion in the form of insurgency has led to the attainment of statehood in both the states.

Observations & Findings-

The Mizos and the Nagas have their own distinctive identity as a separate nation who had their own village rule and administrative. The advent of the colonial rule in the Hill District of Assam from the late 19th Century led to the re-assertion of their identity. The different inclusive administrative policies of the British which were executed in the name of protecting the Hill Tribes from the outside assimilation gave the identity of minority.

The Christian identity is being used by ethnic communities across the northeast states for the safeguarding of political interests. It helps ethnic communities in their political organization and mobilization toward greater political deals. Both identity politics and ethnic identity are complementary to each other. Christianity is a linking channel between the former two in Mizoram and Nagaland. In the Marxist perspective, ethnic identity is a base, and identity politics is a superstructure. Political parties play the role of means for identity politics and ethnic identity. Insurgency is very much linked with identity politics in Mizoram and Nagaland. It was used as a means for achieving political goals by political parties prior to obtaining statehood.

The advent of Christianity has a huge impact upon the identity development in both Mizoram and Nagaland. In terms of identity consolidation. For the Mizos and Nagas, Christianity plays more prominent role than language in ethnic identity formation. The Christian evangelization of the tribal areas of the northeast India by the western Christian Missionaries during the colonial period has changed the development identity among the tribal ethnic groups, more towards western and Christian identity and their cultural practices. Even at the end of the colonial rule, the

influence and the presence of the Christian missionaries to the tribals of the Assam hills districts gained importance as their contribution in the field of education and health section was much more than the government. The Christian teachings and way of life was slowly adopted into the cultural, social and political life in the states of Mizoram and Nagaland. Christianity has changed the entire structure and culture of the Mizo people.

Christianity introduced western system of education, that led to the development of political consciousness among the Mizos and the Nagas especially the early educated class. Even though during the British administration the Hill states of Assam were secluded by the different policies of the British, and the successive secluded policies adopted by the Indian Government in the name of giving more autonomy to the hill tribes of the Assam state.

When it comes to political parties in both Mizoram and Nagaland, it is clear that the emergence and evolution of political parties are not solely based on identity assertion, but because of the western education and political consciousness that developed among the early educated Mizos and the Nagas. Therefore, one can conclude that the birth and history of the formation of political parties in Mizoram and Nagaland is not only because of assertion of identity politics, but because of the gradual development of political awareness through western system of education that was introduced by the Christian Missionaries.

In the post- colonial rule, the impact of the colonial administration was still prevailed, the Mizos and the Nagas were given special autonomy of self- rule under the state of Assam. But due to lack of development and step- motherly treatment given by the authority, the feeling alienation started to develop among the tribals, and this has led to the insurgent movements in both the states. Right from the beginning, the Naga National Council formed in 1945 met the Cabinet Mission in April 1946 and asserted that they would not accept any kind of constitutional arrangement within the Indian Constitution. A nine- point agreement was arrived at, which recognized the distinctiveness of the Naga nation, and gave the latter the option of

deciding within ten years to either join the Union of India or get independent. Launched a plebiscite in 1951 and 99% voted for the separate homeland.

The following year the Nagas boycotted the first Indian Parliamentary election and continued for freedom struggle and declared the formation of 'Naga Federal Republic' as a sovereign state on 22nd March 1956, under the leadership of the NNC. The first Mizo Political Party Mizo Union (MU) when they met the Bordoloi Committee in 1947 in Aizawl wanted Autonomous District Council for a period of ten years. The MNF started the independent movement because of discontentment towards the Assam Government during the Mautam famine in the late 1950s by using the lack of development and identity politics as the main cause of independent movement.

One of the major impacts of insurgent movements in Mizoram and Nagaland is state formation. The state of Nagaland was inaugurated as the sixteenth state of the Indian Union. on December 1, 1963 by the President of India Dr. Radhakrishnan; following the Sixteen Points Agreement by the Government of India, that the Naga People's Convention's Sixteen Points Proposal passed in their third session held at Mokokchung and submitted to the Prime Minister of India in June 1960. In the case of Mizoram, the insurgent movement led by the MNF came to an end after the 'Peace Accord' that was signed between the underground MNF and the Government of India on 30th June, 1986. As per the Accord, The Union Parliament passed the 53rd Constitutional Amendment Bill, 1986 to make Mizoram a full-fledged state. Accordingly, on 20 February, 1987, it became the 23rd state of the Indian Union. Therefore, one can argue that ethnic insurgency led to the development of statehood in both Mizoram and Nagaland.

Christianity played an important role in the political developments in Mizoram and Nagaland. Christian identity gained importance in the construction of ethnic identity in both the state. The role of the Church leaders in bringing peace and signing the accords is one important political development in both the states. One cannot ignore the role played by the Mizoram Presbyterian Church in forming 'a Synod Standing Committee' that immediately called for a meeting of church leaders

from the Baptist and Presbyterian Churches in the south and north of Mizoram to discuss their role amidst the public distress. This was followed by the formation of 'Peace Committee' in 1966 by Rev. Dr. Zairema, Rev. Dr. H. S Luaia and other Church leaders; which acted as mediators between the government and the undergrounds. Again, the formation of Mizoram Kohhran Hruaitute Committee' (MKHC) on August 13th 1982. The committee was created to revive the peace negotiation between MNF and Indian Government, and sent a representative of the peace emissary to the Government of India on March, 1985. From the beginning of insurgency till the signing of the Peace Accord in 1986, the Church played the most crucial role both socially and politically.

In the case of Nagaland, the Church right from the beginning when insurgency was intensified in the 1950s, leaders of Baptist Church stepped ahead to bring peace and normalcy. The negotiation under the initiative of the moderate Naga leaders, Church leaders, a separate new political unit 'Naga Hills Tuensang Area' was formed, this led to the formation of Naga Convention that paved way for the attainment of statehood in 1964. A Ceasefire Agreement of 1964 between the underground Naga and the Indian Government was achieved under the initiative of the Church leaders that led to the establishment of Peace Mission. Again, in 1975, Leader of the Baptist Church played an important role in signing the famous Shillong Accord. Nagaland Peace Council (NPC) that was formed in 1974 was submitted a memorandum to the Governor of Nagaland for restoring permanent peace in Nagaland under the chairmanship of Rev Longro Ao. This was followed by the beginning of talks from 10th November, 1974 that led to several rounds of talk in Shillong that led to the signing of 'Shillong Accord' on 5th December, 1975 in which the underground Naga representatives agreed to accept the provisions under the Constitution of India.

Not only the Church plays an important role in bring political stability in both the states, the role of Christianity in the insurgent politics that is merged with ethnic identity is worth mentioning. The slogan of the underground MNF in 1966 *Pathian leh kan Ram tan* signifies how much religion was used as means to promote Mizo

identity and the attainment of autonomy as a whole. The issue of insurgency and Christianity identity goes a long way in Nagaland political development and identity assertion. One of the objectives of Phizo's Naga National Council (NNC) was 'Nagaland for Christ'. To demonstrate their dedication to the Christian nation and by setting themselves apart from these corrupting practices, the NNC and especially the NSCN preached a puritanical lifestyle that banned alcohol and drugs and discouraged sexual promiscuity in an attempt to 'purify' the nation and to encourage God to fulfil his covenant of making 'Nagaland for Christ'.

In order to establish this covenant, schools and clinics were established by the NSCN that went hand in hand with Christian teachings, and the underground soldiers conducted missionary activities in Burmese Naga territory by converting over 40000 'animists' to Christianity. Biblical names such as Zion, Canaan or the NSCN-IM headquarter Hebron, are used as camp names that signify the pervasiveness of Christian symbols.

Mizoram People's Front (MPF) has played an active role in the electoral politics of Mizoram since its inception in 2006. In every election including the State Legislative Assembly elections of 2008 and thereafter, MPF played the role of a political watchdog, keeping sharp and careful vigilance over the electioneering process of the state. The Nagaland Baptist Church Council (NBCC), the association of Baptist Churches in Nagaland and the biggest Christian denominations in Nagaland also take up an active part since 2013 Assembly Elections in the name of 'Clean Election Campaign (detailed discussion in Page No167, Chapter V) to curb the practice of excessive election expenditure and the culture of gun- power and insurgent group influence in the electoral politics. Yet, the role played by MPF and NBCC in both Mizoram and Nagaland is different, as MPF comprises of different Church denominations and NBCC comprises of different Baptist denominations only across the different Naga tribes.

In Nagaland, BJP is a part of the ruling coalition of DAN. Even though the BJP has 12 MLAs in the ruling coalition, some claimed that it is 'the minority ruling the majority' in Nagaland government. 21 of 25 Naga People's Front (NPF) legislators

switched over to Nationalist Democratic Progressive Party (NDPP) on April, 2022 ahead of state elections due in early 2023. This has shown the closed linkage between the regional parties and the Union government in Nagaland politics. In the case of Mizoram, even though MNF is a part of NEDA and NDA, especially in the Autonomous District Council Areas (ADCs) in the southern part of Mizoram, the main power contestation is between the MNF and the BJP.

Both Mizoram and Nagaland witness the rising of right-wing politics in their states. The BJP has gained popularity in both the states especially after the 2013 State Assembly Elections in both the state. Eventhough BJP was present in both the states from the 1990s, it could never gain its strong hold. But if one analyses the post 2010 state politics in Mizoram and Nagaland, both the ruling parties are in the members of the North- East Democratic Alliance (NEDA) formed by the BJP in 2016 to unite the non-Congress parties in the north east states.

Again, it has already been mentioned that the ethnic politics in Mizoram and Nagaland resulted in the formation of statehood, if we look at the stronghold of the BJP in Mizoram politics, the presence of the Party is seen in the smaller ethnic Mara and Chakma areas of Autonomous District Councils. In Nagaland, the BJP is a part of coalition government known as Democratic Alliance of Nagaland (DAN). Therefore, one can argue that the rising influence of the right- wing party in Mizoram and Nagaland encourages the demands of new autonomy/ statehood in the lines of ethnic minorities in Mizoram and Nagaland. For example, the Maras in the Mara Autonomous District Council and the Lais in LADC areas raised their concern for more autonomy than the present arrangement under the Sixth Schedule of the Constitution of India. At the same time, the Eastern Nagaland Peoples' Organization (ENPO) constantly raised their political demands of statehood for the Eastern part of Nagaland.

By analyzing the election manifestos and the electoral performance of political parties in Mizoram and Nagaland, it is clear that none of the political parties in both the states made the necessary structural transformation in the economic system as the basis for electoral appeal. At best, some parties are committed to

agricultural self- sufficiency within a stipulated period of time without indicating the policy package. There is not much difference in terms of ideology between national and state parties in both Mizoram and Nagaland, manifestos are made and design to suit the regional and sub- regional demands of the time. And much of the promise highlighted in the manifestos are not fulfilled by whichever party that came into power. One could argue that in most of the cases, election manifestos are just drafted and printed for the sake of making it. It is thus, clearly necessary that political parties must retrieve their programmes from abstract idealism to concrete items of socio- economic change for development of the state.

The biggest difference between Mizoram and Nagaland in terms of political developments is that in Mizoram, the signing of the 'Peace Accord 1986' led to the ending of insurgency, which is not the case for Nagaland. The signing of the 'Shillong Accord 1975' did not end insurgent politics; rather led to the birth of a new underground outfit NSCN. The demand for permanent peace agreement is the biggest political agenda of all political parties across the state. The unique and common aspects of political developments in Mizoram and Nagaland is the involvement of various civil society organizations in the electoral politics. The unhealthy trends of elections like the use of money and muscle power in elections were slowly and gradually witnessed in both Mizoram & Nagaland.

Insurgency still plays a bigger role in Naga Politics and political parties across the state accused each other of using gun power for winning the elections. Permanent political solution is the need of the hour. But this is not the case for Mizoram. It is claimed that the Mizo Peace Accord of 1986 is one the of most successful Accord that has been signed by the Government of India.

Identity politics has been used by political parties in Mizoram and Nagaland as a tool for gaining political power and winning the elections. For example, the PC's party stand on re- unification of ZO inhabited areas under one single administrative unit, even sending memorandum to the Prime Minister of India in 1982. When the PC Party was voted out of power from 1984, they used this 're- unification of ZO inhabited areas' as their propaganda and tried to win the support and sympathy from

the masses both inside and outside Mizoram. At the same time, the MNF also used this issue as one of the objectives of the party and it was the main goal during the insurgency movement. Now along with the NGOs, the political parties are talking about the unification of ethnic groups of the Mizos under the constitutional norms, and showed their best in promoting it even in spirit. At the same time, the identity issues and the end of insurgency always remains the biggest political agenda of all the political parties in Nagaland irrespective of their ideologies and their stands.

Suggestions

1. Political parties in Mizoram and Nagaland should fight the political space within their ideology and objectives of their parties. By seeing the performance and stand of political parties, many political parties existed for the sake of exiting, not really put forward the meaning and different functioning of political parties.
2. The issue of identity politics has to be adjusted not to promote the interest of a few sections of the society, but to promote the integrity and autonomy of the state as a whole. The rising demands more autonomy by minority ethnic groups in Mizoram and Nagaland occur due to lack of negligence and under-development because of the actions of political parties who came into power. The minority ethnic groups in both the states felt that the only way of economic and social development for them is more autonomy power that comes directly from the Central Government. This issue is a matter of concern that needs to be addressed by all political parties in both the states.
3. Power hungry and corrupt nature of political leaders that brings out economic disparities between the masses in both states lead to instability of government and unequal development within the state.
4. Election manifestos and agendas should not be designed just for the sake of making it, it should be used as one of the yardsticks to measure the performance of a ruling party.
5. The ethnic and minority politics in terms of favouritism can result in further disunity within the state, political parties should try to avoid this as much as possible.

6. The political parties should try their level best in to promote and protect the special privileges that has been listed in a special provision under Article 371 (A) and Article 371 (G) of the Indian Constitution.
7. Economic disparities, increasing unemployment problems lead to the promotion of insurgent movements in many areas of Nagaland as the movement is somehow taken as a way of earning livelihood. Political parties need to address this issue.
8. For the case of Nagaland, the biggest hurdle in the political development, a Framework Agreement of 2015 should be made as a permanent peace settlement, which has been negotiated by the NSCN (IM) and the Government of India since 2019. Political willingness on the part political parties, Civil Society Organizations and the underground is the need of the hour.
9. Both Mizoram and Nagaland can play a positive role in bringing political stability and development in the North East region. Mizoram can be used as a model state for peace and stability in an institution like the North Eastern Council (NEC) which was created in 1972.
10. Since Mizoram and Nagaland share international border with Myanmar and there are same ethnic tribes live in both the borders, insurgency could be contained in both sides of the border by bringing infrastructure development in the border areas. Political parties in the states could play a bigger role in this by bringing out a solid economic and social infrastructure development plans and implementation of various social welfare schemes.

Table 6.1: Comparative details of Mizoram and Nagaland

S. NO	Content	Mizoram	Nagaland
1.	Ethno political background	Impact of the different secluded policies of the colonial rulers 'leave the tribals alone' policy created a self- isolation feeling among the Mizos	Impact of the different secluded policies of the colonial rulers 'leave the tribals alone' policy created a self- isolation feeling among the different ethnic tribes of the Nagas.

2.	Formation of political parties	Political parties are not solely founded on the basis of ethnic identity assertion, but because of the western education and political consciousness.	Political parties are not solely founded on the basis of ethnic identity assertion, but because of the western education and political consciousness.
3.	Impact of religion in identity formation	Besides the Zo sub-ethnic identity, the advent of Christianity asserted a new identity among the Mizos. The new Christian and Mizo identity as a whole was a new political development of the Mizos in the 20 th Century	Christianity asserted a new identity among the sub-tribes of the Nagas, but unlike the Mizos, it could not bring a new pan-identity among the different sub-tribes of Nagaland.
4.	Role of insurgency in identity formation	State formation is the outcome of insurgency. It asserted a pan-Mizo and Christian identity as a whole. The slogan of the MNF with 'Pathian leh kan ram tan'	Insurgency could not assert one Naga identity as a whole. Even though the insurgent groups claim the Nagas are not Indians, one pan-Naga identity as a single group is not developed.
5.	Role of political parties in political developments	All political parties are functioning within the norms of the Indian Constitution. Corruption and money power play an important role during election times.	Insurgency, money power, corruption and violence still play a larger picture in the political developments of Nagaland.
6.	Growing influence of the right-wing politics	Mizoram has witnessed the growing impact of the BJP in the southern Mizoram towards the ethnic minorities like Mara, Chakma and Brus.	The BJP's domination of the state politics across the different ethnic groups can be witnessed since 2018 state legislative assembly elections.
7.	Role of Civil Society Organizations	NGOs like YMA, Churches and MNF play a bigger role in the state politics and in bringing political stability. The role of the Church during the times of election for clean election is a huge milestone in the political development of Mizoram. There is a sound cooperation between the NGOs and the political parties.	The role of the CSOs and the Church in the state politics and insurgency is less significant in Nagaland compared to Mizoram. Cooperation between political parties and NGOs is less visible compared to Mizoram.
8	Issue of tribalism	Tribalism or sub-ethnic identity is not an issue of Mizoram for one identity formation.	Tribalism is the biggest issue in Nagaland for identity formation.
9	Ethnic Politics	Led to the formation of statehood	Led to the formation of statehood

The thesis shows the concept of identity politics in Mizoram and Nagaland, the role played by political parties in shaping the identity politics in a comparative study. One can conclude that political developments that take place in the two states are the results of the policies of the colonial rule and the continuation of similar policies implemented by the Indian government after independence. These had led to the development of identity assertion in the form of extremism i.e. insurgency by fighting for more autonomy and independence from the Indian Union. Ethnic politics led to the formation of statehood in both Mizoram and Nagaland. However, the birth and development of political parties is not solely based on identity politics, but the western system of education and political culture contributed to the growth and birth of political parties in the two states. Also, the contribution of Christianity towards the expansion of identity politics and tribalism among the two states and the role played by the institutions of the Churches and civil society organizations are worth mentioning in enhancing tribal identity politics in these two states.

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3. Pu Rualchhina, Former Minister, Government of Mizoram senior MNF Leader and the then member of Mizo National Army (MNA). Interviewed on 8th December, 2020 at his residence in Luangmual, Aizawl.
4. Pu C. Zama, member of the then Mizo National Army. Interviewed on 8th December, 2020 at his residence in Chawnpui, Aizawl.
5. Dr. Neikiesalie Nicky Kire, MLA, Nationalist Democratic Progressive Party (NDPP), Kohima. Interviewed on 7th December, 2021 at his residence in Kohima, Nagaland.
6. Dr. Shurhozilie Liezietsu, Former Chief Minister of Nagaland and President of Naga People's Front, Kohima. Interviewed on 8th December, 2021 at his residence in Kohima, Nagaland.

7. Rev. Vikuo Rhi, Youth Secretary, Nagaland Baptist Church Council (NBCC). Interviewed on 8th December, 2021 at the Headquarter of NBCC, Kohima, Nagaland.
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